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THE MANOR AND THE MILL

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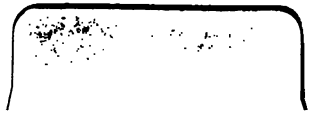

THE MANOR AND THE MILL;

OR,

THE BOYS' INSTITUTE.

BY E. O.

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THE MANOR AND THE MILL.

'PUT down thy book, boy, and come to tea; thee'll never earn thy bread-and-butter by reading!' cried a woman's voice, elevated above its usual pleasant pitch by momentary irritation, as she saw the lad whom she addressed eagerly catching the last gleam of a winter twilight upon the well-worn volume he held in his hand.

'There are some who have earned better than that by reading, Mother,' he answered, shutting his book, and taking his seat at the round table, tidily spread for tea, by the broad bright hearth, at which no candle was yet needed.

'Not such as we are,' returned his mother; 'hand-labour is for us, and plenty of it too; may be, I have been wrong in giving you as much learning as you have had already—more by far than your poor father ever got, or, I will say, ever needed either; and where was there a man in Trenton more respected than he was, or one who did better for his family as long as he lived?'

'There was no one who did his duty better than he did, I firmly believe,' answered the boy, looking steadily into the fire; 'but—I cannot be what he was.'

'I never asked you to sit down to your meals with your hands black from the forge,' replied Mrs. Locksley, (for such was the widow's name,) 'though he, honest man, would come in from his work, and wipe his forehead and give me a kiss, and then cut his bread, and think naught about it. You've been differently brought up; and we neither of us ever grudged you your schooling, Philip, nor anything else we could do for you; times are changed, and we didn't want you to be what we were, but to go on with the times, and get all you could from them. What I do want is, that you would buckle to your work now, and earn a right to be idle by-and-by, if that is what pleases you best.'

'I shall never have such a right!' exclaimed Philip, passionately, 'neither here nor hereafter; if that was to be the end, I would not toil for it!'

'Then why is the money less than it used to be?' asked Mrs. Locksley, narrowly scanning her son's expressive features, and half hesitating, though she spoke sharply.

'You have hit the right nail on the head now,' he replied; and for some moments there was silence between them: it was broken first by Philip. 'I have brought you every farthing of my week's wages, Mother, but I did not work over-time; I was not obliged to do it; you know we agreed that if I did, I should have the money for myself; the men got me to read a book to them I liked, and I seemed to understand it better when I read it aloud, and they all liked it too: so there you have the reason!'

Mrs. Locksley was no weak quarrelsome woman;

she saw at once that in her son's present mood, the style of argument she was prepared with would not succeed; and taking a last gulp of tea, she rose, and went without reply to her ironing-board, at one end of which a quantity of lace and other delicate articles, with a sweet scent of fresh air still about them, lay ready to be finished off, and laid in those dainty wicker baskets that stood near. Philip glanced for a moment at the book he had again opened, then he also got up, and quietly slipped the fresh heaters into the irons, and put them on the stands upon the board; next he lighted the lamp that hung ready-trimmed from the great beam across the ceiling; and as the ruddy light glowed all over the many-cornered room, flickering on the tall clock, and along the oaken dresser, and the polished cupboard-doors, he went up to his mother, who had not yet spoken, and passed his arm round her: 'Good-night,' he said, 'I am going out; don't think I will ever shirk my work, or bring home less than you want, if I can help it: but oh, Mother! Mother! I must learn; I cannot be like the rest; I long to know what the world is, and what it is made of, and what people and things are in it. I cannot be content with only earning food and clothing; and I have no one to help me but Master Craddock, who cannot tell me half I want to understand, and who knows scarcely anything of books, though indeed he does know much more than I do.'

'He is a good old man,' said Mrs. Locksley, whose warm feelings her son's appeal had now fully awakened, 'but don't go after him, Philip;

stay and read by the fire-side if you have nothing better to do; I should break my heart if I thought you would take to herb-gathering and fishing, and wandering about the country as he does.'

Philip laughed good-humouredly. 'No fear of that, till I am, as you say, rich enough to be idle; I was not bred to an out-of-door life like Roger Craddock, and I only wish to enjoy it now and then for a treat; you won't object to that, Mother? He was to get some plants for me, and I am going to see for them, that is all, though looking through that book (he glanced fondly at the page he had left open in Gerard's Herbal) does make one long to set out with him.'

'Then I would leave it alone,' said Mrs. Locksley, setting down her iron with a sharp click, unlike its usual soothing, monotonous sound.

At this moment, while Philip still stood irresolute, came a low tap at the door, and with the chilly gust of wind that blew in when it was opened, there entered also a little girl, holding her cloak round her with one small hand, and in the other a bunch of green leaves and long fibres; she looked rosy, and there was a merry light in her blue eyes, as if she had not been long out in the cold, but she glanced wistfully towards the fire, and round the cosy kitchen, and dropped a curtsy to Mrs. Locksley without speaking.

'It is Lucy Craddock!' said Philip to his mother, with something of apology in his tone. 'I do believe you have brought me a specimen of the cinque-foil,' he continued, taking the plants carefully from her cold fingers. 'O what a pretty *thing*! And what is this?'

'Let her sit down by the fire, Philip,' said Mrs. Locksley, looking round from her ironing at her guest, 'and give the child a cup of tea; you seem to have left plenty this evening. How is your grandfather, Lucy?'

'Quite well, thank you, Ma'am, but he has been out all day, and only came back just before I set out; he was afraid the plants would not dry so well to-morrow, and sent me with them; I mustn't stay, Jem will be wanting me.'

'Only two minutes, Lucy!' said Philip, making her sit down at the table, where, indeed, an abundant supply of tea and good home-made bread was left. Just tell me what this is, while I pour you out some tea, and you get a little warmer.'

'Draba Verna,' answered the girl; 'it came from the top of the walls round the abbey, and he thought you would like it for your book, though it is not rare, only very early; but I think that is as good as being rare, don't you?'

'I think so now, the last week in February; but by-and-by, when the long days come, and there are plenty of flowers, I shall look out for prizes, I can tell you.'

'Such prizes as these?' asked Mrs. Locksley, as she came for fresh irons to the fire, and glanced disdainfully at Lucy's treasures.

'Finer than these, but perhaps not greater, for I am only beginning my collection with the year,' replied Philip, cheerfully; and as he spoke he opened a side-door, and carried the bundle of weeds into what appeared to be a large, nearly empty room, where, as his mother knew, he kept most of his peculiar possessions.

'He'll be in no haste to come out of the rock-chamber,' she observed, 'now he has once got into it; a sight of books, and odds and ends of all kinds, he has stored up there, and they will never be any good to him, I'll warrant.' Then, after a pause, during which the irons often sounded sharp, she added, 'What are you going to do, Lucy, now that Master Craddock is setting out on his rambles again? not to wander up and down the woods and hills with him, I hope, all the summer!'

'No,' answered Lucy, turning her dimpled cheek away as she spoke; 'I am going to work at Mr. Holden's mill; Jem will go with grandfather when he does not travel too far, and they'll most often be at home before me.'

'Poor child!' said the widow, half to herself; 'thee looks like a wayside blossom—it will be hard to shut thee up in the mill; but it's best so, work comes hardest that is not learnt young, and there's no bread like that we earn for ourselves.'

'No, Ma'am,' replied Lucy, meekly, but not as if the widow's tone of consolation was particularly soothing; on the contrary, large tears rose into her eyes, and seemed very near overflowing.

'There won't be much time, I reckon, to iron those nice little collars,' continued Mrs. Locksley, 'when once you set to work; just bring them to me, or a shirt for Master Craddock, or any other little thing you want done; it won't take me five minutes to do what would take you a good while, with my irons hot, and everything ready to my hand.'

'I can take them home, Lucy!' said Philip,

eagerly, as he came back into the kitchen; 'and now I shall take care of you, for I must speak to Master Craddock myself.'

The tears had fallen, but little Lucy looked very well contented, as she turned once more to the bright fire-light, and thanked his mother, before she went with him out into the garden, which had now become nearly dark.

'Cheer up, Lucy!' said Philip, gaily; 'my mother always likes people to whom she can show kindness.'

'Then I am sure she must like me, for this will be a great help; I was vexing myself to think of grandfather's Sunday shirt.'

They passed down the narrow strip of garden, and down some rough stone steps into the lane; there was a glimmering from many a cottage window under the cliff, and half-way up it, on the one hand; and on the other a few straggling trees, and the flat meadow-land, that lay between them and the river: before them were the thousand lights in the tall factories which had gradually risen in every part of the quaint old borough-town of Trenton; and from the midst of the mass of houses rose the noble tower of St. Bride's Church, looming against the pale grey sky. Close underneath its shadow lay Lucy Craddock's home; and when they had passed the first factory, or mill, which was Mr. Holden's, and stood on a bit of the meadow-land near the end of the lane, they had still nearly a mile to go through the streets before they reached it. A great number of people were out, though it was early in the evening, and the day's work was not over;

the click of machinery sounded from many of the small red houses as they went by, and here and there, where an open door or an uncurtained window showed a fire-side group, the father or brothers were sitting at a merino or stocking-frame, and the women and girls were busy over their work, which chiefly consisted in preparing the articles thus made by the men, for warehouses and shops. Nowhere was this universal family employment seen to greater advantage than in the district round Holden's factory; it was a suburb that had only lately sprung up, owing to the demand for labour both there and in the neighbouring warehouses, and it was comparatively clean and well-built; low as the wages were, the number who were all able to earn a little, made them sufficient for the absolute wants of life. As Philip and Lucy advanced further into the town, the streets became so narrow as to be scarcely more than lanes, and behind them, blocking up every space between the backs of the houses, were innumerable lanes and alleys, where still the click of machinery was heard, and women and children bent over their work; nor were these the people to be pitied; but when work failed, or when the sick and the aged and the helpless, were shut up in those unhealthy and crowded dwellings, their condition was sad indeed. At last they reached the court in which Master Craddock lived, and for a court in a manufacturing town, it was not at all a bad locality. Silverwood Place, its inhabitants liked to call it; and very respectable they considered it, to own one of those narrow, high-gabled tenements, of

which it was composed; for each had a tiny strip of ground before it, and the upper windows looked into the garden belonging to an ancient mansion, which had once been the residence of the Arnes, a well-known family in the neighbourhood. The branches of a few old trees spread over the high stone wall, which formed the side of the court opposite to the houses, and as Philip and Lucy passed, they swung heavily to and fro in the cold night-wind; in another minute, however, they both once more stood by as bright a fire-side as the one they had left; and to Philip it appeared at that moment the most enjoyable of the two. There sat his old friend, Roger Craddock, at a small table before the fire, in well-worn coat, and list-slippers, making some of his curious flies for summer angling; and cheerily he welcomed both Philip and little Lucy. The great fire-place occupied nearly all one side of the room, but not an inch of wall was lost; shelf after shelf above it, and in the recesses on either side, was filled with rows of pots and bottles, and shabby books, apparently stuffed with leaves and fishing-line; over the dresser opposite were suspended a couple of guns, with some fishing-rods, while a pair of hunting-spurs, with a riding-whip, and a fox's head and brush, completed a sort of trophy of the chase; from the rafters hung numberless bundles of dried herbs and paper bags; but in all this multifarious assemblage a tidy arrangement was visible, and not a housewife in Trenton could have shown neater rows of tin and crockery than those which shone in Lucy's corner-cupboard.

'Lucy will have to go through the streets alone

in the evening, by-and-by,' said Master Craddock, 'but thank you kindly, Philip, for bringing her home to-night; I wanted to have a long chat with you very much.'

'And I am always ready for one!' replied Philip, taking his favourite seat in the chimney-corner. 'Why, here is Jem!'

'Ah! he would not go to bed till his little mother came back; but he is quite tired out by working with me so long in the garden: we have been sowing for an early crop of peas.'

Philip looked down at the child at his feet lying fast asleep, with his shining cheek just showing under his dark curls, and his head pillowed on a bundle of rushes he had been peeling, till he had curled himself up, quite overcome by the fatigues of the day; he could not help assenting to Master Craddock's oft-repeated words, 'He'll never do for a factory; it would be a downright cruelty to shut him up in one.' 'Many a lad who loved roaming and fresh air, has earned a good living, though,' he continued, 'between four high walls, and has seen something of the world besides; for myself, I don't dislike our work, I never did; it was always my great ambition to be a wool-sorter; it required a kind of skill I thought I should pride myself upon, and I saw that the men who practised it were never out of work, and had time to themselves, and that was another thing I wanted.'

'But how did you learn so young, Philip? that is a question I have often wished to ask!' inquired Lucy, who had taken off her bonnet, and was already busy at the table.

'I was always trying to slip into the room where the sorting was carried on,' he answered, 'when I used to go with father to the forge at the factory, just to see the difference of the fleeces, and to feel them with my fingers; it was a continual wonder to me, to see how they were sorted off into so many degrees of fineness, and I longed to do it myself. One day, a man who has been turned off now, accused me of wanting to carry off bits of the wool, and just as he was swearing at me and making a great noise, who should come in but Mr. Holden himself! He had a great respect for my father, and he made Bill Stanger (that was his name) say out at once all he had to say, and then he asked me why I came there, when I had no business with the work. I had been so riled at being called a thief, that I spoke up at once, and told him how often I had felt the fleeces of the sheep as I lay by them on the Greystone Moors, and observed at what times of the year they varied, and where the wool grew longest, and where it was finest, for that I had always hoped some day or other to be a woolsorter, with good wages, and time for reading; and, besides, I said, I never could help comparing one thing with another, it came naturally to me. Such a good-humoured laugh Mr. Holden laughed out, that it quite put heart into me, for I saw he was pleased; and then he called the overlooker to bring a fresh fleece, or sheet as we call it, that he might see what I could do; I shut my eyes, and passed my fingers through it as I had many a time done out in the fields, and I divided it every morsel, if not so well as Bill Stanger would have

done, still to Mr. Holden's satisfaction; he spoke to my father that day, and the next I got into the sorting-room; I was thirteen, and I have worked there going on for four years. Long after that, I attended the St. Bride's night-school, but of late there has been a great deal of work, and mother is very anxious I should make the most of it while it lasts, and if it had not been for reading aloud to the men, I should have done very little to improve myself at all.'

'What sort of books do they ask you to read?' said Master Craddock, anxiously.

'Oh! all sorts; very often old plays that I don't like, and sometimes odd volumes that are not of much use; I generally contrive to read an article out of Chambers's Journal, and then to get some book it mentions on the same subject; I have read White's Natural History of Selbourne, and Hugh Miller's Old Red Sandstone, and Huc's Travels in Tartary, and many more, in this manner; our work is so quiet, that all can listen, and it is paid for by the piece, so that if they chuse to club together and do part of my work for me, no one can object to it.'

'You are working well, Philip,' answered Roger Craddock, very earnestly; 'only be sure that it is work done for the Lord of the Vineyard, and your wages will be higher than either you or I can think.'

'Yes,' replied the boy, timidly, 'but there is my great difficulty: if I knew what I ought to do—even a foolish story is better than their talk would often be—but, oh! I do so want to make the most of the time; perhaps an hour one day, and less or

more another, we might learn so much if any of us had an idea how to set about it!'

Lucy here caused Jem to uncurl himself from his straw mat, and began quietly to brush his hair by the fire-side, wondering more than ever at Philip's accomplishments, and thinking how pleasant it would be if his reading could be heard in that long bare room in which she expected to spend so much of her future life carding wool, a monotonous employment, for which she at present felt no kind of liking. She was, however, a brave little girl, and she knew her grandfather's resources were, at best, very precarious, so she was determined to do her utmost to learn, and she had already enjoyed the thoughts of the addition her own earnings would be to his. Roger Craddock had been born and bred at Greystones; during the palmy days of the Arnes he had been huntsman there; after these were over, and the family had left the hall to reside chiefly abroad, he had had the house in which he now lived given to him, rent-free, by the squire, and he had made a trade for himself of herb-gathering, fishing, and various other desultory employments, learnt by long experience in field sports and out-of-door life. This suited him, and might even do, he thought, for little Jem; Lucy's lot lay often as a great burthen on his mind.

Roger was now turned seventy, but still hale and active, though somewhat bent by his constant habit of groping and poking about along the hedges, and on the ground; he was also rather bow-legged, as if he had all his life been clinging to the sides of a restive horse, but his keen blue

eye was scarcely dimmed, and there was a kindly smile about the corners of his mouth that few could resist. In short, from the learned doctor, who occasionally gave him a good price for his herbs, to the wife of the artizan who bought a bundle of cowslips or of balm for her home-made wine, and thought, while she smelt them, of her native cottage, he was a universal favourite. Wonderful receipts had he for most of the ills flesh is heir to, and not unfrequently were they successful; he himself devoutly believed in them, and many a time had he visited some out-of-the-way farm-house where his return was expected with the warmest gratitude. Jem, a merry rosy elf, with eyes as black as sloes, and hands always stained with the juice of some sort of root or berry, came in for a large share of the favour lavished on his grandfather, and was generally sure of selling his baskets of early salad, and his basons of bilberries and of blackberries at as good a price.

'He'd break his heart in a factory!' repeated the old man to Philip, as Lucy carried her sleepy brother off to bed in the little attic, 'and besides, I want his help at the garden.'

That small patch of nursery-ground Roger Craddock possessed outside the town, was his constant resource when thinking of Jem; it was steady work he had there at any rate, and so far his conscience was clear. 'We must go through another summer hand in hand,' he added, taking up the fishing-fly on which he had been engaged when Philip entered; 'but Lucy, my poor orphan girl, she must have some trade in her hands

against the day when my time comes to go home. I can leave her in peace if I know I have done all I had the means of doing to enable her to earn an honest living; for the rest, I can, I most often do, cast my care on Him who cares for us, and believe that my poor boy's children will not be left unfriended.'

'That they shall never be,' answered Philip, warmly, 'while I live! It may seem proud to say so, but I feel sure I shall be able to help them sooner or later, and I will.'

There was a firmness of purpose and a power in that honest face and well-knit figure, that gave a glow of fresh hope to the aged man, whose day of strength had nearly passed. 'You will watch Lucy home at first,' he said eagerly, 'just till she gets used to the streets in the evening; when I am here I shall go for her myself, but I can't bear to think of her running through the dark, scared by the rude noises she must often hear; and perhaps—oh, lad! I cannot tell you what I have felt many and many a time this winter while she has sat working so busily by my side, or teaching Jem to read, with her arm round his neck, looking so good and so pretty; and then I have turned in my mind the months that must pass before I can be settled here again, and with all my hopes and my sure knowledge too, my heart has sunk till I could not bear it in the house, and have just walked out in the moonlight up and down under the elm-trees in the church-yard, asking for help and protection for her from our Father in Heaven.'

Roger Craddock's voice faltered as he spoke,

and his hand shook to such a degree, that the delicate fly he was making seemed in danger of becoming a mere knot of wire and down. Philip said nothing, but took up the materials for the next, that lay neatly sorted on the table, and began making a river-fly himself, not expeditiously like Roger, but firmly and accurately, with a pattern-fly before him. His host soon looked on with admiring eyes. 'You have caught the way of fly-tying most wonderfully!' he at length exclaimed, 'considering how seldom you have made one; draw out the body a little with the pheasant's feather at the tip; there, one twist more, and the feelers a little forwarder! I'll warrant as shy a trout as ever swam will come to that bait!'

'We will try him at the back-water up at the hall on Lucy's first holiday!' said Philip, holding up his work to the light. 'And now I must go; but there is one thing I want you to recollect; I had a little sister once—you know how fond we were of her—Lucy is very like what she would have been, and I am sure by her way to-night that mother thinks so too. I will be as good a brother to her, as I should have been to Lizzy; will that satisfy you?'

Roger wrung the hand that was held out to him, but before he had time to say more than 'I know I can trust you,' Philip was gone.

Mrs. Locksley's fire-side had seldom looked brighter and pleasanter than it did when her son returned to it, though the baskets of muslin and fine linen stood ranged in readiness to be carried out to their respective owners, and she herself, in warm shawl and black bonnet, was on the point

of starting. 'Philip,' she had always said to herself, 'shall never find a hearth better swept up than his own;' and he never did.

'I am here, Mother!' he exclaimed, showing his brown cheery face at the door; 'you were not going without me?'

''Deed? was I, then,' she answered; 'you seemed to have others to attend to besides me, and my customers are not used to be disappointed.'

In a minute Philip had contrived to load himself with three of the baskets, and his mother, with two more, was speedily on the way with him along the lane and through the streets to distribute their contents. Mrs. Locksley was always well paid for her work, and, being extremely punctual herself, was seldom kept waiting; many little pleasant chats they had in the different houses at which they called, but the one that made most impression upon Philip, was in Mrs. Holden's handsome back-parlour, where the lady herself came to look over her laced handkerchiefs and French collars.

'They really are a credit to you, Mrs. Locksley; they might have come fresh from the shop!' she said, graciously, as she took up one article after another. 'Miss Arne, I hear, will be at the hall very soon, and I should not wonder if you got all her fine washing, clear-starching, I ought to say; but, to be sure, she will bring some gay lady's-maid who will pretend to do it herself, though it will be different enough, I'll be bound, from what yours is.'

Now the thing Mrs. Locksley valued herself

upon most, next to having such a son as Philip, was her ironing, but she was too proudly conscious of its merits to talk much about them. 'I am glad you think the things look as they should do, Ma'am,' she replied; 'but did you say Miss Arne was coming back to the hall? it will be a lonesome place for her to live in by herself.'

'It is only to gratify a wish she expressed to Mr. Godwin, when he went to see her at Paris at the time of Lady Arne's death,' replied Mrs. Holden; 'she wanted, she said, to spend a few weeks there this summer, to look over the estate for her brother, just as if a girl of her age would understand business of any kind; she will soon get tired of it, I should imagine.'

'Is the young squire likely to come too, Ma'am?' asked Philip, modestly.

Mrs. Holden turned towards him in astonishment, at one of the hands belonging to her husband's mill presuming to address her at all; but considering that he was also Mrs. Locksley's son, she answered, coldly, that she believed he was; Mr. Godwin expected he would try to get leave from his guardian, Lord Warrender, to spend the holidays at Greystones.

'That will make some difference to Master Craddock, I should think,' said Philip to his mother, when they were again in the street; 'the young squire will scarcely have forgotten him, though he was but a child when he was here last; I hope he will be as open-handed as his father was about the fishing; it is impossible now to get leave to go up to the back-water; even Master Craddock is likely enough, he says, to be inter-

fered with, though Mr. Godwin knows well he had leave from Sir Edward, and has a right to go there when he pleases.'

'New masters, new ways,' answered Mrs. Locksley; 'I would not advise you to trust to old leaves; young Mr. Godwin is the real master now.'

'He would not grudge a day's fishing to Roger Craddock, surely!' exclaimed Philip, with indignation; 'why, he was born and bred upon the land, and I do believe he loves every inch of it as if it was his own.'

'You said he expected to be warned off,' answered his mother.

'But he has a right there!' repeated Philip, 'and justice is justice after all.'

'It is not always done,' she replied, shortly.

Philip was not slow in communicating the intelligence he had received to Master Craddock, to whom the idea of seeing the young squire at Greystones was, to use his own words, 'as welcome as a south wind on a spring morning.' He had not known him since he was a little child, riding his Shetland pony in short petticoats, with bare fat knees, but he was the son of Sir Edward, whom he had loved as a boy, and cared for all through his life; above all, he was the grandson of 'the old squire,' that very perfection, in Craddock's eyes, of all an English gentleman ought to be, with his loyal and religious spirit, his impartial justice, and his love of field sports.

'Those were the true sociable days!' he exclaimed, as he talked over the news with Philip, 'let who will say to the contrary; everybody was

free to join the squire's sport, whether he was hunting in winter, or fishing in the river and dragging the ponds in summer, or shooting upon the moors in autumn; there were always those about him who enjoyed themselves to the full as much as he did, or any of the gentlemen with him. It was a sore grief to him that his only son cared for nothing at Greystones, though he was proud of his being a brave soldier, and great were the rejoicings when he came home knighted, after one of those bloody battles in Spain. Not long afterwards, peace was proclaimed, and he was free to sell his commission, and to live as he pleased.'

'And then did he really please to live away from Greystones?' asked Philip, in surprise.

'That he did, more's the pity; it was little his father ever saw of him after his marriage; he cared for nothing but foreign paintings, and music, and such like things; he spent a deal of money upon them, and had nothing to show for it after all, for he never lived long enough at the hall even to have his cases all unpacked; he was always wanting fresh improvements before he had well finished those he had begun, and it worried the squire to see how Greystones would be altered after him, and all the old ways changed. My old master was laid in his grave, with the blessings of all the country round upon him, and Sir Edward seemed at first as if he would have lived among his own people; but he soon got tired, and went abroad again, leaving a grand plan that the squire never could be brought to consent to, for pulling down one wing of the hall, and adding

a portico and a long gallery and conservatory which were to open into a billiard-room, instead. Mr. Godwin, I believe, told him the estate would not bear all this outlay, besides his own expensive living, but he would not listen to him, and what was the consequence? The building was finished, and Sir Edward and Lady Arne gave one fine ball in the gallery, and the house was full of company for some weeks, and then they never came to enjoy all their grandeur again; he died at Paris, and the next news we heard was, that his lady had died too, and that the young squire and his sister were left to the care of their uncle, Lord Warrender. Since then, Mr. Godwin has chiefly lived at the hall, and I believe is taking good care of the property, but it was almost enough to make the old squire start from his peaceful grave, to hear the building going on at Lime End, which Mr. Godwin has allowed, "to restore the fortunes of the family," as he says, but I say to ruin the estate, and to make it unfit for a true Arne to live upon. If it was for the young squire that everything is so strictly preserved, I should not say a word; close to a town, and with the factory on the very grounds, there would soon be no game left if great care was not taken; what I grudge is, that those who have never had to ask leave for the last threescore years—ay! and there are not more than two or three of them left—should now be warned off for the pleasure of Mr. Godwin's son.'

'We will try a day's fishing there! I do not believe anyone will interfere with you!' cried Philip, catching his old friend's enthusiasm; 'you

shall fish, and I will read. Oh! will it not be pleasant by the lake when the oaks are all in leaf? Lucy will have a holiday before that time, though we must go there first on Easter Tuesday.'

'Ah, poor child, her holidays will soon be very few!'

'But we shall have long evenings,' replied Philip cheerfully, 'and she will soon begin to like her work as others do.'

The winter had been unusually mild for the Midland Counties, and now, towards the end of March, the narrow strip of ground in front of Roger Craddock's cottage was full of snowdrops, yellow and purple crocuses, and aconites, with daffodils just coming into bloom, and large tufts of primroses, brought by Jem from the hedge-bottoms. The long catkins of the poplars that waved over the garden-wall belonging to the old mansion, were beginning to show, and the shining buds of the horse-chestnuts looked ready to burst, so did the leaves upon the lilacs. By all these signs Lucy knew that her time for going to the factory was drawing very near; and she worked all the more busily, that the family wardrobe might be in good order before that important time came. She was alone, looking with real pleasure over the well-darned socks, tidy shirts, and strong trousers, provided for Jem's summer rambles, late one afternoon, when Mrs. Locksley herself appeared at the door, a great honour in Lucy's eyes, for she seldom had a visitor of so much importance.

'I thought how it would be, my lass,' said the

widow, seating herself in Master Craddock's chair; 'much work for others and little for thyself! But let me see what you have got ready; there will seldom be time for needlework after next week, and Mr. Holden's foreman, I will say for him, is particular how the girls look when they are admitted.'

Lucy showed, without any cause for shame, her tidy lilac cotton frocks and her stuff gown and grey cloak; but she saw, with open eyes of wonder, the addition to them that Mrs. Locksley brought out of her large market-basket. There were six neat little stitched collars, as white as snow, just ready to put on, six pairs of warm woollen stockings, and a shawl of such soft shepherd's plaid, that she felt it over and over again with fresh pleasure.

'O! Mrs. Locksley, I shall never feel cold with this shawl on! How good—how very good you are to me!'

'This is Philip's present,' said the widow, graciously; 'bought with his own money, but he would not bring it himself; he made me stuff it into my basket, that you might have all together to-night; and, let me see, there is one parcel more I know will be useful, even if you have begun some of these things for yourself; you will want more than two, so they will in no way be too many.'

With these words, Mrs. Locksley took out, folded in the nicest manner, two large brown-holland pinafores, with bands at the throat and at the wrists; but as she held them up Lucy's eyes overflowed with tears, between pleasure and pain.

She knew the regular working-dress of the girls employed in the great wool-factory; how many times she had thought of it, and pictured herself in it; and then fancied the long twelve hours dragging on, while she stood feeding one of those untiring machines whose ceaseless whirr it made her head ache only to remember.

'Don't be down-hearted, child,' said Mrs. Locksley, as she saw her struggling to swallow down her tears with desperate gulps, while she bent over the pinafores to smooth out the folds; 'thee'll soon like the work, as others do; and fourteen shillings a-week, Lucy, think of that!'

'I do think of it,' answered Lucy; 'but it seems a great way off.'

'Why, it is board and lodging, and good clothes, and everything!' continued the widow.

'Yes, less than that would be a great deal. I am very glad to go. And oh, please don't think me ungrateful; and thank Philip very much for me. These are beautiful pinafores; those I had begun were not half so good. I meant to finish them the last thing, but Jem's socks have taken me a long time this week.'

'And now I have only one thing more to say before I go,' said her visitor, looking contentedly at her, as she rose from Master Craddock's chair. 'Philip begged I would see you at home before you went to the factory; and I have seen you, and am sure you will do well there; if it is but little you earn at first, you are certain to get on as well as anybody; and remember, as long as I live, you have a mother at hand to help you. As to your running back here at eight to breakfast,

that's an impossibility; leave your coffee at my door, as you pass, and I'll have it ready for you with Philip's; you'll only have half-an-hour. Good-night. I can't stay to gossip; that's not my way.'

While Lucy looked over her treasures with increasing admiration, Mrs. Locksley was pursuing, also, a tolerably pleasant train of thought. 'I shall have no reason to thwart him,' she said to herself; 'it is but a little creature yet; but she's twelve, nearly thirteen; years soon pass, and I'm much mistaken if there is not the making of a notable housewife in her: I'm not afraid for Philip; he'll be as good as his word, and be a brother to her while they are passing. When he told me of his promise, how like his father he looked! like, and yet different. Ah! my John was no scholar!'

When Master Craddock came home, he also brought a contribution to Lucy's preparations, in the shape of a nice basket, and a bright tin can for her morning's meal; and thankful and glad he was to know of Widow Locksley's visit, and to hear and see its results. It took more than half the burthen from his mind, when, a few days later, he left his little granddaughter at the door of the carding-room in Mr. Holden's factory, and saw her pretty young figure, for the first time, arrayed in one of Mrs. Locksley's long pinafores; her shining brown head was as neat as ever; and she stepped into the room with a quiet, composed look, as if she were no longer frightened at the sound of the machinery. Philip had stopped, just after they had entered within the massive walls of

the factory, at the sorting-room, where the fleeces were first taken fresh from the fellmonger's, to be divided, as he had described, into about seven different qualities, from the finest wool growing on the sheep's shoulder, to the very coarsest. When this process had been gone through, it was cleared from dust by means of a winnowing machine, worked by the same giant engine that set all the numberless cylinders in motion throughout the building. Next, the wool was carried into a long gallery, where, on one side, there were boilers for the soap, and on the other, great tubs, in which it was washed clean. After being dried over heated flues, part was left white, and part was dyed in various shades of grey, red, green, and blue; and then began the girls' work of carding.

Lucy was placed, for the first few days, under the care of an older girl, named Betsey Shelton, and learnt to lay the wool even, upon the sack-cloth frame, which was continually drawn under the six cylinders, all studded with sharp thistle-pricks, so that it came out at the opposite end of the machine, looking like a large sheet of loose wadding. Thus prepared, it was placed in a second machine, and separated into narrow strips, then made into great balls, to be afterwards spun into yarn. Three of the balling-machines were watched by a single girl, and those used for carding were so wide, that the young workwomen stood at a considerable distance from each other all down the long, long, room, in which nothing was heard but the sound of machinery. They were dressed alike, in brown-holland pinafores,

and as their hair alone could be seen, they seemed to take particular care of it. Betsey Shelton rejoiced in large brown bows at the back of hers, and some others wore dangles of various kinds; but, generally speaking, nothing could be neater or more cheerful than the look of the girls. Poor little Lucy used to feel very tired for a long time after she began working, and thought she never could have got through the day, if it had not been for Mrs. Locksley's kindness in letting her go to her house for breakfast. She always contrived to run home for dinner at half-past twelve, when she expected to meet her grandfather and Jem. If they were out, she sometimes found it prepared by a kind neighbour, named Sarah Smedley, who had a general charge of the house in the absence of the family, and kept the key; sometimes she dined also at Mrs. Locksley's, when various good things, of which her basket had had no knowledge on her departure from home, were often found under the cover.

It did not detract from Mrs. Locksley's kindness, that Master Craddock paid her regularly a shilling a-week, for warming Lucy's coffee, giving her potatoes, and, in fact, in Trenton phrase, 'doing for her.' Such arrangements were often rendered necessary by the work at the factories, and were usually observed with great fidelity.

She entered the factory at six in the morning, and left it as the great bell clanged out six in the evening, so that there was still time for a pleasant evening after tea, if she felt able to enjoy one; and in time she did feel quite able, for the work, however monotonous, was not in itself fatiguing.

She grew stronger with exercise and abundant food, and she became used to standing the whole day, which was the hardest part to bear; but for many weeks it was weary labour, and at the time of which we are speaking, she was often unable to eat when she got home to tea, and was obliged to go to bed even before Jem. Then Sunday came at last, the great day of rest and refreshment to mind and body; whose unspeakable blessings none, perhaps, know better, than people employed in manufacturing districts, however slow they may be to avail themselves of the yet greater blessings of religious instruction and of religious worship. How happy Lucy and Jem, and their grandfather also, felt, when the holy day broke, and they knew that they would all be together while it lasted. Pleasant it was to them to wear the well-kept garments that they never wore on other days; to be somewhat long over their breakfast, instead of swallowing it down in a great hurry, as Lucy often did hers, with only half-an-hour to get out with a crowd of fellow-labourers from the factory, to eat it at Mrs. Locksley's, and to be at her work again; very pleasant to take their places in the venerable church close to their dwelling, where all that met eye and ear and feeling, was so different to the brick and mortar, and to the ceaseless whirr of Lime End.

The old man's thoughts were so constantly with his child, that even among the fields, in which his own life was chiefly passed, that long bare room, and the grim machines, seemed always near him. Neat as the young girls employed there appeared in their working-dress, it too often covered much

untidiness; and in the evenings, and on Sundays, many of them made amends to themselves for wearing it, by a gaudy finery incomprehensible to those who have never lived in a manufacturing town. Lucy scarcely knew her companions, at first, in their change of attire; but she never wished to imitate it. Her wages rose from four shillings a-week to six, during the first two months of her being at the factory. The coveted fourteen no longer seemed so immensely far off, but she never fancied she should be happier in a flounced dress and artificial flowers, even when she grew as tall as Betsey Shelton. A fair young face it was, in her little straw bonnet, and lilac print gown, that shone out by Master Craddock's side, as she came slowly out of church, on Easter Tuesday, after the morning service he had attended with his children. As he stood under the old elms, that had just budded into young vigorous life, and formed already a green cloister round St. Bride's, he might have been thought not unlike them, and amongst the few who had worshipped there, many who paused to exchange a pleasant greeting with him, felt there was something in his face that made Heaven seem less shadowy and far off than it had done before.

Philip Locksley was soon by his side. 'Now for a walk at Greystones!' he exclaimed. 'I know Lucy has got dinner nearly ready, and we shall have a long afternoon to spend there; it will do her good to see the violets there again; and if we cannot ramble about the woods, as we used to do, we may still walk along the river-side!'

There was no reasonable objection to be made

to his scheme, and before the blue sky had lost any of its brightness, the whole party found themselves in the long avenue that led from Lime End very nearly up to the hall.

Every tree was in bud, or green with unfolding leaves; the grass was golden with the water-buttercup, and in the little hollows formed by the uneven ground, which ran down from the hills to the flat strip of turf by the river, there was the sweet-scented gorse in gorgeous bloom, and such an embroidery of white and blue violets, as made Lucy's heart dance for joy. Then, the primroses under the trees had never before seemed so abundant, nor the sweet warm air so full of the singing of birds; together they banished the sound of machinery from her poor, tired little head, and gave her new feelings of life and strength.

'How different it is now,' said Philip, 'to stand still and listen for the first sound, to what it was the last time I was here, a few days after you told me about Lucy's going to the mill!'

'You had not to do that for more than a minute,' replied Roger Craddock, resting on his stick, and looking round with infinite satisfaction. 'Let me consider. You heard, first, the tap of the nuthatch on the bark of an old tree where plenty of food was ready, or on an acorn or nut it had stored all through the winter against hard times—'

'Or did you fancy someone was whetting a saw in those opposite meadows?' asked Lucy, 'and then find it was only the marsh-titmouse, with its two grating notes? That is one of the quietest sounds I know, though it is not so pleasant as the singing of birds; but there were not *many of those then.*'

'There were few enough to make one listen for their separate notes,' answered Philip; 'the hedge-sparrow, and the yellow-hammer, and the chaffinch, and others we have lost sight of now. I remember, too, the hum of bees along this bank, for I heard it just as I saw the few crocuses I took to you; they were nearly covered with decayed leaves; and farther on, under the wood by the church, I found the hellebore, showing its blossoms as it sprung out of the earth.'

'A good place for it to be found in,' said Craddock, musingly; then added, almost to himself, 'First-born from the dead, have Thou, mercy on Thy people now!'

'You are thinking of the Easter-hymn, Grandfather,' said Lucy. 'I have said it over so often to myself at the factory! I tried not to set it to the sound of the machine, but it would go to it. At last I sung it very low to the tune we always sing it to at church. I often sing now, for I do not think anyone hears.'

'If you can begin,' said Philip, 'we might sing it here, and you would always remember it afterwards, with the river and the lime-trees, and all of us together. Let us try.'

'Ay, do, my darling,' said Craddock, 'and Jem knows the words too.'

The three young voices rose sweet and true as they sung the following hymn:—

Christians, offer praises meet
At the Paschal Victim's feet!
For the sheep the Lamb was slain,
Our redemption to obtain:
Hallelujah!

Wondrous conflict! death and life
Met in strange and awful strife!
Though the Prince of Life hath died,
Living shall His crown abide:
Hallelujah!

Mary! what did'st thou behold?
Angels by the tomb who told,
'Christ is risen, gone is He
On before to Galilee:'
Hallelujah!

Christ, our hope, is risen indeed;
Saviour, be Thou still our speed!
First-born from the dead, have Thou
Mercy on Thy people now!
Hallelujah!

Before the last sounds of the hymn had died away, Philip's voice had ceased altogether; and Lucy saw that he was making a great effort to keep down a sob; it would come at last, however, and he walked away for a few minutes.

'I know it is very foolish,' he said, as he joined Craddock again. 'I thought this time I should have got to the end; but those words always make me feel as if I heard a trumpet calling us to fight; my heart seems to leap into my throat.'

'It is a call to fight manfully under Christ's banner,' replied his friend. 'The wonder is, not that it moves us, but that we remain so downcast, when we hear of His Resurrection; for we are one with Him; He is the Head, we are members of His Body. O, Philip, here is our strength! This only gives us a good hope of victory.'

'I do often wish to do some work for Him,' answered Philip, slowly, as if he feared to trust himself to speak. 'Sometimes I think I will try

to read the Bible first to our men, when they ask me to read to them, but am afraid, even if I did, some things would be said—I should not know how to answer; and perhaps my own mind would be set wrong, and I should do no good to others. Is it not safer to leave that alone?'

'Not if you think there is any opening whatever to do any service for Christ; and, besides, are you sure not one of them would help you?'

'I am almost sure Sykes reads his Bible on Sundays,' replied Philip, 'but I know he can only just spell it out, for he is a very poor reader.'

'Then ask, next time, if they will be content if you repeat a parable while you are at work; perhaps Sykes will be on your side, and be really glad. People do not know till they try, how, like rain upon dry land, a few words from the Bible come on working men's minds.'

'I can repeat a good many,' replied Philip, with animation sparkling over his honest face. 'I was always used to learn one every week at school, and I often said them to myself, but since I have been learning Latin, I have not thought so much of them.'

'Learning Latin, Philip!'

'Yes, Lucy; I believe I could read the hymn we have just sung, in its own old language now, if I knew where to find it. I write out my day's lesson in the evening, and set it up somewhere near my work, and I generally contrive to learn it off, and to do some exercise upon it in my mind that I can again write and compare with the book in the evening. What I want is a wire,' he added, laughing, 'to tie all my bits of learning together,

and make them into a useful form; such a one, Lucy, as twists all those tiny scraps of wool and feather and silk, that you sort out so nicely, into real serviceable fishing-flies.'

While they talked, Roger Craddock and his young companions were approaching nearer to the hall, of which the garden-front (as it was called) looked out over the river, so that the west-end was towards the avenue, with the principal entrance showing through the trees. A little to the right rose the grey tower of the church, with a small neglected church-yard round it, half surrounded by great yew-trees whose long, dark branches stretched over the low wall, and nearly dipped into the water. The extent of the mansion itself could be judged of, chiefly by the number of tall, wind-defying chimneys that rose above the irregular roofs, and the dark shadows thrown far out upon the turf by the many projections of bay-windows and turrets. It was built partly of red brick, partly of stone, but the whole was harmonized by the colouring of time, and by the masses of luxuriant ivy that reached even to the quaint dormer windows, and hung out their wreaths from the belfry. There was an air of extreme stillness round it, which was rather increased than broken, by the chattering of birds as they now retired to their nests, and seemed bidding each other good-night. Very quietly, too, along the broad green drive, came a pony-phæton, which had almost touched old Craddock before he was aware of its presence. A young lady was driving it, and beside her leant back an elderly gentleman with grey hair, who just touched his

hat in reply to the old man's respectful bow, but seemed too much absorbed in the stillness and beauty of the evening to notice him farther. Not so, however, his companion, who looked with eager interest at him, and then at Philip and Lucy, who were at some little distance, having been called by Jem to watch some field-mice under a horse-chestnut-tree. They were not so far off, however, but that they also saw her well, and watched the pretty carriage to the door of the hall, which was instantly opened by the little page behind, and the lady and gentleman went in. In a minute more the young people were by Master Craddock's side.

'O, Grandfather! who do you think they are? Can Miss Arne have come home without anyone's knowing she was here?'

'That little carriage passed our house yesterday,' said Philip, 'but we never thought of her.'

'I believe it was Miss Arne,' replied Craddock, with some emotion. 'I have not seen her since she was younger than Lucy is now by some years; she must be about nineteen; it was the same sweet face, with darker hair and eyes, that I have watched many a time, as she rode in the grounds upon her Shetland pony, with her little brother by her side. Eh! but she is grown a noble-looking young lady!'

'And the gentleman with her?'

'I think—nay, I am sure—that was Lord Warrender; but we have never seen any of the family for so long—and he must have aged very fast in ten years, if that was he.'

'Ten years is a very long time,' observed Jem; 'I'll be a man in ten years to come!'

Now, as it really was Helen Arne and her uncle, Lord Warrender, who had passed, and as their arrival at the hall on the previous day had been almost as great a surprise to themselves as to anyone else, we will look over a letter that left Greystones that evening, and was received in due time at Riversedge House, a place in a neighbouring county belonging to Lady Arne's cousin, Mr. Granard. It was addressed to his maiden sister, and ran thus:—

'The Manor House, April 20th, 185–.

'My dear Cousin Anne,

'I have, as you see, at last succeeded in my long-cherished plan, and am once more at Greystones! It was difficult to persuade my uncle that I could be sufficiently happy here, even for a few days, to make it at all worth while to leave town just at the beginning of the season; but he had business at Redleaf, and, fortunately for me, wished to see for himself the changes that Mr. Godwin has made on this estate, so that he at last yielded to my entreaty, and brought me down with him. We are only to sleep here two nights more, and then to return to Brooke Street. I wanted to see my old home again, and to go over it all by myself, before I decided on persuading my brother to spend the Midsummer holidays here with me, for I had heard so much of its being completely spoilt by the neighbourhood of the factory and its surrounding buildings, that I began to fear he might take a thorough dislike to it, and be induced, by-and-by, to give it up altogether as a residence. The woods are indeed most beautiful, and still uninjured by the unpleasant means Mr. Godwin has resorted to, as the only ones by which our fallen fortunes might be raised, and Edward's position in his native county secured. The grounds are in a more neglected state than

you can well imagine, and the out-buildings have been used as work-shops for the people employed on the new railway that now runs within a quarter of a mile from our doors. But, after all, here is our home; and but few changes have passed over the house itself; it seems quite a rest after all the variety I have witnessed, and our many wanderings, to come back to so much that I remember when I was a child. In London there are many things I enjoy very much; but in the gayest scenes, and even with the pleasantest conversation going on round me, there is a scene still more present than the one I see, and other voices than those I hear are sounding in my ears. You, dear Anne, know all I mean, for I am sure you remember those warnings and entreaties, the neglect of which at times I feel so bitterly. My uncle agrees to my coming here in June with Edward, if you will promise to stay with us; and there is so much to be done amongst our own people, that I must try to interest him in the work, before other pursuits and objects gain all his attention. I know there are many difficulties in the way; but something at least may be done for those brought to live upon our property, for whose well-being, it seems to me, nothing is yet prepared. Dear Cousin, will you come and help us?

'Ever affectionately yours,

'HELEN ARNE.'

Cousin Anne would certainly never have received such a letter, if she had been at all likely to hesitate about her answer; she did not however propose receiving Helen and Edward at their own house; she preferred being herself welcomed by them when the 20th of June arrived, and they had taken possession of the most habitable part of the old hall. Helen had had no time for the arrangements she had thought of, during her short visit with Lord Warrender, and was obliged to trust to those of Mrs. Deane, the

housekeeper settled there by Mr. Godwin; but it was with glad and hopeful heart she entered on her duties as the young lady of Greystones, and began to restore a comfortable look to the rooms her brother, Miss Granard, and herself, were to occupy. The library, a room up-stairs, with a beautiful oriel window, and a number of family pictures ranged above the oaken book-shelves, was the one she thought they should all like best; and here, on the second morning after their arrival, she had already established her work-frame and her drawing-materials, and covered the bare tables with pretty embroidered cloths, and readable books, filled china vases with common flowers, and given a touch to the old chairs here, and a little pull to the faded curtains there, which altogether had effectually dispersed all gloomy ideas; she had sat down to enjoy the results of her labours by the wood-fire she would keep burning in the large grate, though the windows were open, when Edward came in, looking very handsome and very much discomposed.

'I have been talking to Mr. Godwin,' he exclaimed, 'about the game, Helen! He tells me it is scarcely possible to keep any, either in the covers or on the moors; his son has had it all in his own hands for some time past, and has been as strict as possible; but the poachers and the keepers seem to be in league, and without fresh men we shall have nothing left by September. Is it not too provoking?'

'I should not have thought things could be so bad as that would come to,' replied Helen, doing her best to enter into her brother's excitement;

'but Mr. Godwin ought to take proper means to protect the game; surely, with all he has done, he must have money enough to preserve thoroughly, if indeed you really wish it.'

'Of course I wish it,' answered Edward; 'what other pleasure could there ever be in living in this place?'

'If you were going to stay here a few minutes, said Helen, 'I should be so much obliged to you if you could mount the steps again and arrange the books in that upper shelf; it is nearly beyond my reach, and I left them at last for you to do.'

'That I will,' answered Edward; 'I am sure you must be tired, how much you have done! The room does not look at all like what it was when we came, and yet I do not see anything new—nothing at any rate to make such a difference.'

'There was no lady's litter here before,' said Helen, smiling, and pleased with her brother's praise; she looked up at him as he stood sorting the little black volumes on the upper shelves, with admiring eyes; he was only fifteen, though his tall lithe figure, and a certain boyish dignity that had increased since he had felt himself lord of the manor, gave him the appearance of being a year or two older; she had always been accustomed to think of his welfare as the great object of her life, and now she really would try to care about the shooting if it was to keep him attached to Greystones.

'I only wish,' cried Edward, 'that the place had been left as it was in our grandfather's time, just as Cousin Anne remembers it. all the

labourers and people employed on the estate lived upon it then, and the hamlet looked so pretty through the trees, just where that frightful factory stands now; those were the times for me!'

'They were pleasant times, no doubt,' answered Helen, 'but as we did not live in them, it is just possible that we may look at them as we do at a picture of a place we have never been in; everything that is not picturesque is of course left out, and if we saw it for ourselves we should perhaps scarcely know it.'

'O! you are too well satisfied with things as they are!' said Edward, impatiently. 'I declare if it was not for the recollection of what has been, and the hope of being able some day to shut out all those new buildings, I should not care a straw for this place; we would give it up altogether, and find another home, Helen, where all we saw should be really our own.'

'I see nothing here,' said Helen, looking intently through the open window, 'that is not really your own. I see a crowded town, for which our ancestors served as sheriffs and members of parliament, and where you will one day have influence that may perhaps be more wisely directed than theirs was; I see a great building where hundreds are at work, earning bread for the families who live in those little red-brick streets running down towards the river; you are their landlord: I know that there are lanes and alleys that likewise belong to you, to which those hot narrow streets are perfect Paradise; here is work for us both, such as we cannot find elsewhere; this is our home—our father's home, dear

Edward,' she continued, passing her arm round her brother, for while she spoke, he had bounded down from his ladder, and joined her at the window; 'we never must leave it to strangers.'

'I don't want to leave it,' replied Edward; 'I only want to bring it back by degrees to what it has been; but no doubt we must take the evil with the good, for the present, and Mr. Godwin tells me that by the time I come of age the estate will be worth enough to enable us to live where we please.'

Helen did not sigh, but after one more earnest look out of the window, she proposed a ride over the hills, to which he gladly assented, and mounting their ponies, they had soon started through the green glades of the park, and were cantering along the short thymy turf of the moorland that stretched far away above the valley, in which lay the smoke of Trenton, and the woods and hall of Greystones. At last they descended into a little ferny hollow, where they were obliged to pursue their way cautiously on account of the great stones that lay among the gorse and heather in their path.

'It was just here,' said Helen, 'papa told me first of the changes that were likely to take place at Lime End; he little thought how far they would go! It was about the time of year in which I paid my flying visit here with Uncle Warrender, late in April; the hedges were full of white-thorn, and the apple-blossoms and the May were not come out. I had observed an old-fashioned-looking cottage there, with its back in the sand-rock, and some fruit-trees covered with

blossom nailed along the walls, and I hoped it would not be touched when other houses were built; I was quite glad to see it again yesterday exactly the same: I must find out who lives there, for old acquaintance' sake.'

'None of our own people, I dare say,' observed Edward. 'What makes you think so often of that disagreeable place?'

'I have thought of it,' answered Helen, 'ever since I stayed last year at Riversedge, and saw all that Charles and Anne Granard have done for their village, which I imagine must have been much more unhealthy and untaught than Lime End can possibly be.'

'Charles is a first-rate shot!' exclaimed Edward, touching his pony; 'he would be of great use to us, if he would come to us, and look over our covers. I don't believe there is a more capital fellow in England! His river, by the way, is much more unmanageable than ours; there are no swamps, thank goodness, at Greystones.'

'But Charles,' pursued Helen, 'had a great undrained parish, nearly all on his own hands, fifteen years ago; and his income is, as we know, by no means large. Cousin Anne says there was consumption and ague in almost every cottage; and when the river overflowed its banks, as it does once or twice every year, and turned the poor mud floors into puddles, fever followed as a matter of course. His father had begun the good work of draining, but Charles continued it; he left his own house with paint and furniture shabby enough, but by degrees he rebuilt every row of

cottages high and dry, and fitted them up with every necessary convenience. The church had no doubt been very picturesque, overgrown with ivy, and full of tumble-down pews, with the chancel crowded by monuments; but he restored it, in the best sense of the word, made it again fit for the accommodation of all who lived in the parish, retaining only what was beautiful as well as old. Then the schools—O, Edward! it would do your heart good to see them. I particularly remember the infant-school, with its comfortable low-backed benches, not too high for baby-legs; and the safe merry-go-round, and swings, in the play-ground: how the tiny things crowded round Charles, and poked their shining heads under his hand! Then there were schools for boys and girls, and a young men's club, supplied with well-chosen books, and maps, and newspapers, which they themselves chiefly supported, and a coffee-room adjoining it, that no excuse might be left for drinking. Charles took me all round the village, and I peeped into some of the out-houses, at the back of the cottages, where every preparation was made for baking and washing, and storing up gleanings, and wood, and coal; we stood still for a minute at the highest point, and looked down the valley. The sun was just setting, and it glittered along the clean cottage-windows, and on the gay little gardens, and brought out the fine lines of the old church in full beauty. Charles said to me: "This is a scene of which I am never tired;" and I said nothing, but in my heart I answered: "In the hour of death, and in the Day of Judgment, you will think of it as you do now!"

'Go on,' said Edward.

'We went back to the Manor-house, and I no longer regretted, even for Anne's sake, the faded furniture, and the two old men creeping about the garden, and doing so much less than was really wanted. I knew they only worked in fine weather, and were employed there because they had worked well in their day, and it kept them from the necessity of receiving parish relief. I found that the reason for my seeing so many new young servant girls, in addition to the two excellent upper-servants, who had lived there for years, was, that Cousin Anne was afraid of the girls in the village giving too much time to reading and talking, especially as nearly all are employed in making pillow-lace, which is very close and quiet work, and generally done in parties assembling at what are called lace-schools: she therefore had the elder ones up to the house, two or three at a time; they helped in the dairy, in making bread, and in household work, but especially in simple cookery, and in getting things ready that were wanted by the sick.'

'Why, I thought,' interrupted Edward, 'people never were ill at Riversedge!'

'It would have been even a more wonderful place than it is,' answered Helen, laughing; 'be it known to you, that they will sicken and die there now and then; and that I heard Charles talking to the doctor of a bad case of fever in the neighbourhood that very evening, which led to Anne's telling me how highly her brother's medical skill was prized. I am sure he had earned it hardly; for having no particular business

to attend to on leaving college, he studied medicine, and regularly walked the London hospitals. Twenty years ago, when cholera was so bad, he passed his whole time in the neighbouring districts where it was worst. Anne told me all this, as if it was the most natural thing possible to do; and added, that he was often now a week or a fortnight away from home, when fever was raging, as it sometimes does, in some remote village, to encourage the people by his presence, and to see proper precautions used, and proper remedies given.'

'I have heard Lord Warrender speak of him as an excellent magistrate,' said Edward, warmly, 'but I knew very little of all this; it will be a long time before we can do anything like what he has done.'

'We may begin,' replied Helen, 'with Anne Granard to help us; we are not rich, but I can do something out of my allowance, and Mr. Godwin will attend a good deal to your wishes. I never will despair!'

Helen did not look at all as if she ever would despair of anything she had set her heart upon; she rode beautifully, and as Edward and herself finished their ride by a canter home through the park, it would have been difficult to find a happier pair. They returned to the hall more pleased than they had ever been before with its shade and stillness, after the unusually warm exercise they had taken on a midsummer's day; they did not even mind the sound of the bell at the great factory, so much as they had done the day before, though its distant clang was heard up the lime-

tree avenue, and through Helen's favourite oriel window. To many hearts it brought feelings of unwonted gladness, for it set the crowd of workers free for the enjoyment of a rare half-holiday.

Roger Craddock and his grand-children had determined to spend it amongst their old haunts at Greystones, accompanied, as usual, by Philip Locksley; but Craddock had already been there with Jem for many hours, pursuing his wonted avocations, of fishing in the morning, and later in the day, of searching many a well-known nook for herbs, before Lucy and Philip were able to join him.

The lake, or back-water, was in fact a broad creek of the river that ran through the rich pasture-lands, and past the town of Trenton, though it was apparently closed in by a great mass of granite rock, that rose grey and rugged to a level with the moors, and abruptly terminated their highest range. The outlet to the river was nearly concealed by the tangled wilderness of underwood, that spread its branches far out over the water, and afforded an excellent shelter to the wild-fowl that had brooded there from year to year undisturbed. The side of the lake on which Craddock had settled himself was clothed by hanging oak-woods, decked in their freshest russet and green, which glanced where the sunbeams fell through them, as if gold and gems were stored away among the leaves; while the opposite banks were laid out in terraces, shaded only here and there by a single stately tree, or a group of flowering-shrubs; all had long been neglected, and the stone vases by which they had been

adorned held only trailing weeds; but a glow of colour was still thrown along the water by masses of lilacs and rhododendrons, along the banks, and on the water, and the tiny waves rippled pleasantly up against the moss-grown steps, that were half-hidden by a shower of laburnums. Roger Craddock thought of the days when he had seen Lady Arne embark from these steps, with her children and friends, in the gaily-painted pleasure-boats that used to be moored there for excursions on the river; but rich as the gardens then looked, they had never seemed to him more beautiful than now. As these thoughts were passing through his mind, he heard steps approaching fast through the wood, and soon distinguished Philip's merry laugh, and a few gentle tones that warmed his heart; and then Lucy came first in sight, with her hands full of flowers, and wet water-cresses, and her cheeks glowing with exercise, followed by Philip, carrying a basket in one hand, and his fishing-can, with a book tied on to it, in the other.

'Here we are at last, Grandfather!' cried Lucy, as she gave a spring from the bank to the margin of the lake, and alighted close to his side; 'we have kept you a long time waiting for your dinner—but, oh! how good it will be!'

'The best I have seen for many a long day,' he answered, 'now that you have brought it out to this sweet place, after such a long imprisonment; she does not look much the worse for it, after all: eh? do you think she does, Philip?'

'Not just at present,' he replied doubtfully, setting down his load; 'we have had a walk that

would do anyone good; we could scarcely get on at first for the May; Lucy was very near bringing enough to make a bower of it here.'

'Where it is not much wanted,' she interrupted, 'for only look at that old thorn, with its roots in the water! did you ever see anything look so clean and bright?'

'Yes, here is one of mother's little table-cloths, which we will spread without loss of time; but where is Jem? he should not be far off at dinner-time.'

'He'll soon be here,' replied Roger, as he helped Lucy to unpack the basket; he has been busy all day in carrying work home for your mother, Philip, and a good job it is for him when she wants him; but he was here not a quarter of an hour ago, and I cannot think what he set off for again.'

'He is a handy little fellow,' answered Philip, 'and mother is always glad to employ him; whatever he does is done so tidily and carefully.'

'Yes,' said Lucy, 'he puts all his heart into his work; but now, I think, we must begin without him; he surely cannot be long away; shall I call him, Grandfather?'

'Not for the world, Lucy!' replied the old man, hastily; 'the wild-fowl are easily disturbed at this time of year, and we are near the decoy.'

'Well, my lass!' said Roger, when he had seen Lucy fairly begin her dinner, 'this is better than the mill, and yet that has not been so bad as I feared.'

'Not really bad at all,' replied Lucy; 'I was a good deal dazed at first, and very tired—more

tired than you thought,' she added, shaking her head at her grandfather, 'but it is all getting better now. Betsey Shelton was sharp and short enough, but she showed me what I had to do, and how to do it, and that was the thing I wanted; she is much more good-natured than she used to be.'

'I'll trust thee to work patiently, and to make friends,' replied Master Craddock fondly; 'and here is a word to keep thy spirit quiet and glad in that great noisy room: "Light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart." And then again, a sentence from the book of a holy man, whose name has never been rightly known on earth, though doubtless it is written in Heaven: "With Thee my heart is without a voice, and my silence speaketh unto Thee."'

'It is a comfort,' said Lucy, after a pause, 'that the noise is not that of voices; I am getting used to the machinery, and you would laugh at some of the fancies I have about it. I think it sounds like the wind through the high trees upon the moor, and I seem sometimes almost to watch the clouds drifting over them, as I have so often done; then I consider where the thistles have grown, that are set thick in the cylinders, and what will be done with the wool I am carding; all this passes the time, and at three o'clock I repeat a Psalm, as I know you are doing, and I think what you and Jem will be about next. I am so glad I have been so much in the fields with you, and heard your stories of other times, and other places—I am very seldom dull.'

'There is a story, Master Craddock,' said

Philip, 'that I want you to tell me, about that grey crag yonder; I have heard my mother speak of it, but I should like to hear it from yourself.'

'It will be eighteen years ago come next January,' answered the old man, 'since I had been out nearly all day with the young squire, as we then called Sir Edward, and a party he had brought down with him; we had had very good sport along Charnwell Chase, and across country towards the Hagg, when suddenly the stag doubled, and made for home; we were all well tired, dogs and horses, as well as men, when he reached the High Elms there, just showing above the crag, as the mist came creeping up from the meadows, and we could scarcely see where he was; but I thought he meant to keep along the edge of the moor, till he could plunge into the oak-coppices, and so cross the lake. Sir Edward seemed all at once more eager than he had been all day; he set spurs to his horse, and cheered the dogs, calling to me not to let the stag escape. On we went, still at a good hunting pace, and in another minute I saw a pair of antlers through the mist, at the very edge of the cliff; in another, Sir Edward's grey mare dashed on right before me, and I knew it would be impossible to draw her in time enough to save horse and rider from going over. I rode a pony I could trust, and I knew there was only one chance for my master, so I made a desperate effort, and just pushed in sideways before he reached the edge, and threw him backwards on the turf, as the stag leapt off into the lake. The mare had reared and fallen, Sir Edward with her, but neither were

much hurt; my shoulder was dislocated, and I was in great pain, but little I thought of that. O boy! it was the proudest moment of my life! The place from that time was called "The Stag's Leap."'

'Was Sir Edward grateful?' asked Philip, shortly, though he had listened with breathless interest to the story.

'Yes he was, and his family too; he said I had saved his life at the risk of my own, which indeed I was in duty bound to do. Sir Edward came often to see me while I lay ill, for rheumatic fever set in as my shoulder was getting well, and he used to comfort me, under the fear of never being able to ride again, by promising me a small farm, on such terms as would have made a rich man of me by this time; but it was not to be. Before I got well, he went abroad again, and clean forgot all about it for a long time. All things were changed after that; the stud was sold, and I was turned off, for the agent found it hard enough to send the money Sir Edward wanted. He did write about me, however, and the house in Silverwood Place was given to me, rent-free, for my life; and that, with my savings, set us up; they were not much, for my wife died at Greystones, and my son, who had gone abroad to Sir Edward, came home in bad health with Lucy; his wife was a pretty German girl, of whom Lady Arne was very fond, and she kept her on as her maid after her marriage for some time, but Annette wearied to join her husband and child, and at last she came to us. Never had I thought to like a foreign daughter-in-law, but she was so

good and cheery, and took so kindly to our ways, that I could not have liked an English one better. Well-a-day! my boy went first, a little while before Jem was born, and his wife soon followed him; so I had to do my best for the children.'

Just at this moment a sudden noise was heard in the still oak-coppice, and then a splash in the water, which raised a perfect hubbub of cackling and screaming from the wild-fowl along the shore, many of whom were soon seen scuttling across the water.

'A wild-duck has been frightened off her nest in the decoy!' cried Roger. 'See, there she goes! I hope and trust Jem has had nothing to do with it! I should have called him long ago, if I had not been afraid of frightening the birds. Lucy, go and see what has become of your brother.'

Lucy was already on her way through the wood; but at that moment rough voices were heard in the distance, and directly afterwards a small boat was seen shooting round the grey crag called the Stag's Leap, into the quiet waters of the lake.

To their infinite distress, Roger and Philip saw little Jem on board with his arms tied behind him, and his face wild with terror. 'O Grandfather! he cried, 'save me! take me back! I never meant to frighten the birds. Oh! don't let them carry me away!'

He was answered by a box on the ear from one of the men that nearly threw him down; he cowered on the gunwale for one moment, and the next, as the boat came near the shore, he

tried to throw himself, bound as he was, into the water, and all but succeeded.

'Let the child alone!' cried Roger; 'give him back to me, and I'll make all straight—stop one minute, and let me know what he is accused of!'

'Stop—stop! for pity's sake!' screamed Lucy.

'Where are you taking him to?' asked Philip, more quietly, of the rowers, one of whom he recognised as the new under-keeper.

'We have found out his tricks at last,' answered the man, 'and we cannot let him go nohow. We are taking him up to the hall to Mr. Godwin; and my advice is, that you had best see to yourself.'

'Keep up, Jem!' cried Philip, as the little boat skimmed rapidly along; 'don't fear; we'll be at the hall as soon as you are! Come, Lucy, don't take on so; he'll be safe, depend upon it.'

'He's been herb-gathering!' cried Lucy. 'See, he has thrown a bunch of flowers into the water; that was what took him away!'

In the struggle, Jem's hands had got loose, and the first use he had made of their liberty had apparently been to send this token to his friends; but the bunch of pink flowers did not come near them.

'Oh! my poor child!' groaned Roger Craddock, 'why didn't I see after him sooner! But you are right, Philip, we have not a moment to lose!'

'Not so fast, my friend,' said a peculiarly unpleasant voice at his shoulder; 'I shall have a word to say as to how you dispose of the rest of your time this afternoon; you have lost none of it as yet, I see.'

As he spoke, the new comer, a young man who looked very like a lawyer's clerk, in a suit of new velveteens, very deliberately opened Craddock's fishing-basket, and emptied out its contents upon the bank; while Philip hurriedly assuring Lucy no harm would happen to either Master Craddock or Jem, disappeared among the trees. She stood in mute dismay, looking on at the fate of her grandfather's beautiful fish. There they lay, a perfect picture to a fisherman's eye. Pike, and roach, and dace, with all their delicate tracery, bright and fresh from a wrapping of the wet river-weed, upon which they had so lately fed.

'Whose are these, pray? yours or mine?'

'Mine,' replied Craddock, steadily, 'by the right of the same authority, Mr. Richard Godwin, which placed your father here.'

'Say that again, you old scoundrel, and I'll have you down beside them!' cried he of the velveteens, in a high squeaking voice of great indignation.

'It is useless to repeat it,' answered Craddock, 'for you understood me; and as to knocking me down—' There was a twinkle in the old huntsman's eye which gave his assailant an uncomfortable feeling in the shins, and finished the sentence as well as words could have done; but, retreating a step, he continued, in a less bullying tone, 'So you really mean to tell me that Sir Edward's leave gives you a right to carry off what you please out of the water and out of the woods; to set young poachers here to disturb the game and to break down the fences, and to undo in a few hours what costs us no end of money in pre-

serving. We shall soon hear what the young squire will say to that.'

'It is a good twelvemonth, Mr. Godwin, since I used my old leave at all; and I have never come here for more than a day now and then at any time. As to my little grandson, whom your men have carried off to the hall, I cannot answer for what he might have been doing at the moment the bird flew into the water, but I believe he no more frightened her than a squirrel among the trees would have done.'

'Your old leave, did you say?' asked Mr. Godwin, eagerly. 'Let me see it. Of course you do not come here without it. Eh?'

'I have no written leave,' replied Craddock, with a slight tremulousness in his voice; 'everyone knew that I had it at the time it was given.'

The only answer was a whistle strongly expressive of doubt.

'Who was the elder boy with you? Has he an old leave, too?'

'He did not want one; he was going to read, not to fish. But, Mr. Godwin, I must go up to the house and see after my grandson; I cannot let him be there alone; he is only nine years old, Sir!'

'I suspect you will have to let the law take its course, whether you like it or not,' answered Mr. Richard Godwin, throwing the smaller fish deliberately back into the lake, and casting an unpleasant look at Roger, as one after the other they floated on their backs towards the opposite bank. The fine pike were left undisturbed.

Meanwhile Philip had crossed the park by a

shorter cut than the gamekeepers were able to take after securing their boat, and soon stood breathless in the courtyard. He determined to ask at once for Miss Arne, on whose interest he thought, from his short glimpse of her face, he could rely.

Helen had just unlocked an old Indian cabinet in the library, and was busy in examining its contents, when a servant brought his message.

'A boy from Mr. Holden's mill, Ma'am, begs to speak to you; he seems very anxious indeed to see you, and would not be satisfied, though I told him Mr. Godwin settled all matters of business for you.'

'It is not necessary to say that again, Johnson, when I am asked for; let the boy come up;' and in another minute Philip entered the room, with great awe of the books and pictures by which it was surrounded, and yet more of the gentle presence in which he found himself, but determined to plead Jem's cause and Master Craddock's to the utmost of his power.

'Roger Craddock's grandson, did you say?' asked Miss Arne, with eager interest, as Philip began very modestly telling her what had happened. 'Surely I remember him; he is one of the persons I most wished to see! I thought I recognised him in his grey suit the first time I came here with Lord Warrender, but he had not observed him, and I was not certain, or I should have turned back then to speak to him.'

'It was him you passed in the avenue, Ma'am,' said Philip; 'the boy and girl near him were his grandchildren; and Jem, Ma'am, is a mere child,

and such a handy, useful child, he has never learnt a dishonest way.'

'Not from old Roger, I can well believe; but my brother is very anxious about the game, and I must not make any promises without speaking to him. What were you doing at the time yourself?'

'I was listening to Master Craddock's story of the Stag's Leap,' answered Philip; 'and I had Izaak Walton's Complete Angler in my hand, for I was going to find his directions for cooking some of the fish for Lucy.'

At this instant Edward Arne burst into the room. 'There has been an affair with poachers, Helen, at the back-water!' he exclaimed; 'they are caught, and the men are bringing them in to the justice's-room now. Mr. Godwin will send them to prison, I have not the least doubt!'

'I should have great doubt about it,' replied Helen, 'were I in your place; for I would listen to every particle of evidence myself, before I gave the smallest sanction to such a proceeding. What if these formidable poachers should turn out to be not only innocent, but also our friends?'

'Friends?' repeated Edward, inquiringly, and with some annoyance at his sister's coolness.

'Yes; I call the man a friend who threw himself between our father and the very verge of the cliff along which we rode to-day, when his horse was on the point of carrying him headlong over it. Is not this the story you have heard him tell of Roger Craddock?'

'I do remember it,' answered Edward; 'that alters the question—at least, so far as we are con-

cerned. But who have you here?' he added, glancing at Philip, who stood near the door, to which he had retreated on the young squire's entrance. 'Is this your informant?'

'It is,' replied Helen gently, 'one of the poachers you heard of, only that he happened to be reading or talking, not fishing, nor yet snaring birds.'

'And who will answer for this?' asked Edward, scornfully.

'Mr. Holden, Sir, will speak for my character,' said Philip, 'should that be necessary, or anyone you chose to send for from Lime End.'

Edward looked steadily at him as he spoke, and his countenance resumed the expression that was natural to it, for he felt intuitively that there could be no deceit in that clear honest face and pleasant voice. 'Let us go together,' he said, 'to the justice's-room; we shall see how matters stand there, and I will speak at once to Mr. Godwin. I do not think it will be at all necessary for you to call witnesses.'

'Master Craddock, Sir,' said Philip, respectfully, 'would be sorry to be brought off as a matter of favour; he would much rather witnesses were called.'

'Oh! never mind,' replied Edward; 'no harm shall happen to the boy, or to him either, if he is the man I have heard my father speak of, and whom, indeed, I certainly recollect myself. Come along, and I'll see him off safe.'

Edward went out of the room, but Philip lingered for a moment behind. 'Could you send as far as to Lime End, Ma'am?' he said earnestly

to Helen, 'and ask my mother yourself where Jem Craddock spent this morning? I could run and be back in a very short time, but that would not answer the purpose so well.'

'I will send my maid for her,' answered Helen, 'if you will tell me exactly where she lives.'

'In the white house with its back in the rock, Ma'am, at the entrance of the lane; everybody knows Mrs. Locksley, the laundress, there.'

'I will take care she hears first of this business from myself,' answered Helen; and Philip left it in her hands, well satisfied, and followed the young squire, who called him, impatiently, from the gallery into which the library opened.

The justice's-room at Greystones was a long, low, oak-paneled apartment, on the ground-floor, hung round with such family pictures as had from time to time been judged too grim or too bad for the rest of the house; the lower part of the walls was farther darkened by huge folios of law-reports and similar works, all looking very imposing indeed. At one end of a massive table stood a high-backed chair, and near it a few more of less comfortable appearance, but none were to be seen by the door, where many a poacher and rural offender had stood and trembled in past years. Mr. Godwin, in his character of lawyer and agent, had only lately been made a justice of the peace; although he had never lived at Greystones, he was in the habit of attending there regularly once a fortnight, to transact business, and it was always satisfactory to him to have any to do in his magisterial capacity.

When Edward, followed by Philip, entered the

room, they saw Master Craddock standing at one end of the table, with Jem close beside him, and Mr. Godwin opposite, in the high-backed chair; the gamekeepers were in the act of showing the fish captured at the back-water, with the farther announcement that they had seen many floating dead along the shore as they returned to bring the old man up to the house. Lucy, pale and shivering with the agitation of the past hour, stood as near Jem as she could, but he was guarded by the keepers, as if they considered him the principal offender.

Edward walked straight up to the head of the table, where Mr. Godwin instantly made room for him. 'I am glad you are come,' he said, raising his spectacles at the same instant from his nose, by way of salute; 'you will judge for yourself, Mr. Arne, how it is that, in spite of all our precautions, the game is poached off the estate; and not by new comers, I fear, so much as by experienced hands.' Here he glanced severely at Philip, who had taken his stand near his friends. 'Not only the fish are carried off by means of a drag-net at night, but likewise the most valuable birds are constantly snared. Burton, show Mr. Arne what you have found to-day!'

To the amazement of Philip, the under-keeper, with a look of triumph, lifted up from the ground a beautiful woodcock, not bleeding from shot, but with its neck evidently broken.

For the moment, Edward's indignation had been calculated upon rightly. 'Who do you suppose, Mr. Godwin, has done this?' he exclaimed. 'If these are the depredations we are subject to,

it is time, indeed, to stop them by any means in our power!'

'You shall hear the evidence,' said Mr. Godwin, 'and I fancy it will turn out pretty clear. My son had an engagement which prevented his being present, and although he thought it necessary to keep the party together, he had no wish to deal hardly with Craddock. An old servant has privileges, but they must not be carried too far.' So saying, with another awe-inspiring look, this time directed to Master Craddock, the justice replaced his spectacles, and settled himself comfortably in the great leathern chair, while Edward, too impatient to occupy his, stood near him. 'Now, Burton, tell the young squire how the bird was found.'

The gamekeeper, a small ferret-eyed man, scratched his head by way of exordium, and began: 'I never see that 'ere old feller till this mornin', but Jem Sykes he've often see'd him about the premises, and warn'd him off; he tell'd me so afore I went on my beat to-day; he and his boys; so when I caught sight on him, I were, as in duty bound, very cautious.'

'You mean to say that my father's old huntsman was described to you as a suspicious character!' interrupted Edward. 'Well, go on.'

The man seemed a little abashed at Edward's manner, but went on: 'I followed the young un pretty close when he left his grandfather, as he caus him; and now, if he goes down among the decoys, thought I, I'll know; but he did not keep along the path, nor yet down by the water; he just creeps away through the underwood, like

a cat, up to the edge of the moor; and sure enough these were as good a dodge for catching a woodcock as ever I see'd, and better; for I never see'd sich an one before.'

'At what time was this?' asked Edward.

'As near as I could judge, about half-past two,' replied the man.

'And you had never interfered with the fishing in the morning?'

'No,' answered Burton; 'what I thought of were the woodcocks; a many have been carried off lately.'

'You saw a snare,' continued Edward; 'was the boy setting it?'

'Fur from it,' answered Burton; 'he were taking out the bird.'

'That's a lie!' exclaimed Jem, looking steadily up into Burton's face; 'and you know it is!'

'Hush, my lad!' whispered Roger. 'Truth is truth, and it will come out in time. May I ask, Sir,' he continued, addressing Edward, 'what kind of snare this was?'

'Tell us, Burton,' said the young squire, 'what the snare consisted in?'

'I don't think,' replied Burton, fidgetting from one leg to the other, 'that I could rightly do that with only seeing it once.'

'Was it a common wire-spring?' asked Mr. Godwin; 'you can tell us that.'

'No; it were a long osier wand, stuck in the ground hoop-wise, with a running noose, very natty; and so soon as the bird touched the end of the stick, it rose up like a trigger, and struck him on the breast; and somehow he found his-self

in the air in no time, hung by the neck; but I can't say I could do it myself; the boy, he'd been used to it, or a more knowing one had set him on; that's more likely by a deal.'

'Well,' said Mr. Godwin, smoothly, 'you saw the boy come out of the cover, and begin taking the bird out of the trap; what next?'

'He were setting to work very cleverly, when I starts up before him; with that he gives a cry, and dashes down into the wood, enough to scare every bird along the back-water. I were soon after him.'

'That will do, Burton,' said Mr. Godwin, who had taken down his evidence very carefully. 'Have you any other question to ask, Mr. Arne?'

'Not now,' replied Edward. 'I want to hear Jem's story first;' so saying, he went kindly towards the group at the other end of the long table, and seeing Lucy looking very tired, he made her sit down; then bringing little Jem round to Mr. Godwin, he said, 'Now speak boldly, and tell us exactly what you were about; don't be afraid, even if you were poaching; you shall learn to do cleverer things than that.'

'I went to fetch some centaury,' answered Jem, simply. 'I remembered seeing some on the edge of the moor last summer, where the beasts were feeding. I wished to show Lucy that I did recollect the places where the plants grow we are sure to want.'

'Did you find any?' asked Edward.

'Yes; I had just tied it together when I caught sight of the bird in the noose, two feet above the ground. I was going to look at it, and I thrust

the flowers into my trousers, but just then the gamekeeper came upon me, and caught me by my collar, and dragged me through the underwood to the edge of the water; the other man was there with the boat, and they tied my hands behind me, and said they would take me before the justice.'

Here Jem's eyes quite overflowed as he looked down on his torn clothes and poor scratched hands, but he did his very best to gulp down his tears.

'A plucky little fellow,' thought Edward. 'I would lay anything he is innocent.' 'But what has become of the flowers?' he asked; 'centaury, do you call them?'

'I threw them to grandfather on the water,' answered Jem.

'Bless him!' cried Roger, 'so he did; but I had no time to go round and look for it; I were willing enough to follow him up here.'

'We should know centaury,' exclaimed Philip, eagerly, 'if it had floated ever so far; and it only grows in dry pastures, so that it could not have been gathered on the banks of the lake!'

'If the boy's account be true, which I doubt,' observed Mr. Godwin, 'a bundle of weeds must long ago have been lost in the current.'

'The dead fish your son threw into the water, Sir,' said Roger, in his most respectful tone, 'floated to the opposite bank; two or three were caught by the old boat-house steps; I saw them as we came up here.'

'Ah! perhaps so,' returned Mr. Godwin, carelessly; 'and that reminds me of your share in this business. Where is your leave to fish in these *waters?*'

'It is in the name of the 'Stag's Leap, Mr. Godwin!' interrupted Edward, impetuously. We all know how the old crag got that name, and as long as I have any interest in this property, Roger Craddock shall be free to fish here as he pleases.'

'This is not the place for discussion,' answered the magistrate, slowly. 'The charge for the present is dismissed; but I cannot answer for it to your guardian, Mr. Arne, whatever may be your own view of the subject, that wholesale poaching should be encouraged.

'No,' answered Edward, colouring; 'no one has the slightest intention of allowing it; the execution of the woodcock must be inquired into; but surely this young girl is not wanted here, and I think my sister would wish to see her.'

So saying, with gentle and hearty kindness, he led Lucy himself to his sister, assuring her at the same time that justice should be done both to her grandfather's character and to little Jem.

'Now, Helen,' he continued, after giving her the briefest possible account of the late proceedings, 'could you not just walk down to the old boat-house, and see if this bunch of centaury can be found; it may be an important witness in Jem's favour.'

'Most gladly,' replied Helen; 'but I have a witness of my own to bring forward if necessary; Mrs. Locksley, mother to the lad who first brought the news of Jem's capture; he begged me to send for her, and she is here now.'

'Let her come to the justice-room, then, by all means!' exclaimed Edward. 'I feel sure that Burton is the real culprit himself; but I am very

anxious that Master Craddock and his grandson should be cleared to the satisfaction of everyone; they belong to us.'

Helen smiled, and thought, though she did not say, that so did many more besides. 'Bill Burton belongs, I suppose, to Mr. Richard Godwin, and it would, perhaps, be as well if you can clear the Craddocks without criminating him; to be content to leave him to his own master.'

The young squire's eye flashed fire, as he stood for a moment with his hand upon the handle of the door. 'No, Helen,' he said, 'justice shall be done, let who may suffer by it.'

Helen returned to her dressing-room, which opened out of the library, with Lucy, who, to her great joy, saw Mrs. Locksley, looking very warm with her walk, and very much flurried, but, as usual, neat, in her snow-white cap and grey shawl.

'I'm quite ready, my lass,' she said, taking her cold hand in hers, 'to go before the justice—ready and anxious too; but Miss Arne will settle it as she thinks best, and maybe her speaking for Jem will be better than mine.'

'Only better, Mrs. Locksley,' said Helen, tying on her bonnet, 'because I think the fewer are brought into this affair the better, and I am quite sure Mr. Godwin will be satisfied with my statement. Now, Lucy, let us go.'

They were soon on their way through the shrubbery, and along the broad terrace-walk by the lake, with Lucy close to her; and before they had reached the boat-house, a cry of joy from her young companion announced that her quick eye

had caught a glimpse of the pink bunch of centaury. There it lay, rising and falling with the mimic surf, just at the angle formed by the steps, that jutted out far into the water. How quickly a branch from the nearest tree brought it within reach, and how joyfully Lucy shook the drops off its delicate sprays, need not be told.

'See, Ma'am,' she exclaimed, as she held it up to Helen, 'the care Jem took of it! it is scarcely crushed in all his fright; that is always the way he touches flowers and plants.'

'The touch of a good gardener,' said Helen, gaily; 'perhaps some day or other we may make him one. And now let us hasten back to the justice-room.' The little crowd at the door made way respectfully for her as she entered with the bunch of centaury in her hand. 'Will you admit me, Mr. Godwin?' she said; 'I am bringing a fresh witness.'

'Then I have little doubt,' he replied, rising to receive her, 'that it is one on Jem's side, for already I have heard sufficient to dismiss the case.'

'But I wish that it should be made perfectly clear to every one,' said Miss Arne, 'that Roger Craddock's grandson is innocent of the charge brought against him; here are the flowers he said he went up to the moor to gather.' And she laid them on the table, while a buzz of satisfaction was heard at the other end of the room. 'Till near that time I know that he was employed by Mrs. Locksley, the laundress at Lime End, in fetching her work from different parts of the town, and I leave you to judge whether he could

also have been poaching in the practised manner my brother described to me.'

'No,' replied Mr. Godwin, quietly and slowly; 'it is extremely unlikely that he should have done so.'

'Impossible, Sir!' exclaimed Edward, who had been turning over the woodcock, and gently moving its beak and claws. 'I am sure this bird has not been dead two hours.'

'Blessings on you for a true Arne,' cried old Craddock, with pleasure that could not longer be repressed; 'there's no gainsaying that.'

'The case is dismissed,' again repeated Mr. Godwin, rising, and pushing back the great arm-chair. 'My son will be glad, very glad, to find he was mistaken; but his interest in all that concerns this property, will not allow of his taking any injury done to it quietly. A farther inquiry will be made,' he added, glancing severely at Burton, 'as to the real culprit in this business; for the present, all may withdraw.'

That evening Bill Burton gave his master warning, considering himself an aggrieved man, and declared his intention of immediately returning to his own part of the country. What that particular district of England might be, afterwards appeared, by the peculiar skill with which woodcocks and other large birds were therein captured by means of osier traps; but this is a digression.

Helen and Edward lost no time in making Roger Craddock feel once more at home at Greystones, and after a comfortable repast in the housekeeper's-room, and a lengthened conversa-

tion with his young master and mistress, as he lovingly called them, he returned to Silverwood Place with his children; Philip having already gone home with his mother, whose feelings were in a state of great perturbation at the events of the day.

'I will say for Miss Arne, however, that she is a sweet young lady, and not proud a bit,' observed the widow, as she once more seated herself at the round table before the fire, at which we found Philip first. 'I little thought what was going on when she sent for me up to the hall this afternoon to speak to her, and by little and little she made me tell her all I know of Master Craddock and his grandchildren. "We know scarcely anything, Mrs. Locksley," she said, "of the people who used to live round our house, and nothing of those who are now come to live at Lime End, but we wish to be of what use we can during my brother's minority, and we are determined, as far as possible, to learn how to serve their best interests." Now was not that pretty of her? Those, I believe, were her very words; and I said, "As soon as you show that you have this feeling towards us, Ma'am, you will have no lack of work." We were still talking in her dressing-room, when the young squire came to the door, and she went out to speak to him; but I heard how eager he was to bring Jem off clear, and when I saw Lucy go with Miss Arne to find the flowers, I was sure all would come right.'

'It has been a strange way of becoming friends,' observed Philip; 'but perhaps there could scarcely have been a better for making us aware of their

real characters. Miss Arne seemed shy, if one may say so of a lady, when she came to speak to us in the housekeeper's room, much more so than when she walked up to Mr. Godwin with the bunch of centaury in her hand; and who would have thought the young squire cared so much for a poor boy like Jem, if we had only seen him riding past, and heard that he loved his game, and hated the sight of the factory, by which so many of us earn our livelihoods?'

'Well,' answered his mother, 'it has been a stormy holiday, but I'm glad we know they have hearts, anyhow; they may do a deal of good by-and-by.'

'I wish I could get some of the books I saw to-day,' said Philip; 'that would be doing me a great deal of good now.'

'You have too much of your book now, Philip,' answered his mother, rising hastily, and beginning to sort her muslins for the next day's work; at which Philip laughed and shook his head, and then sat down with book and slate to write a Latin exercise, in the difficulties of which he soon forgot even the exciting events of the day.

The next few days passed on very happily with Edward and Helen. Lord Warrender had offered to lend his niece the pretty park-phaeton in which she had first driven him through the grounds; and though with the boundless health and energy of nineteen, she infinitely preferred for herself riding with her brother, or walking for miles in the evening along the fragrant moor, often ancle deep in fern and heather, she thought her sober cousin, Miss Granard, who had now arrived,

might be disposed to enjoy it; she was pleasantly surprised by Helen's offer to drive her wherever she pleased.

'I had no idea, Helen,' said Miss Granard, 'that I should find you already so completely a country girl, after scarcely more than one year of English life.'

'Have I not entered at last,' answered Helen, smiling brightly, 'on the duties of our English home? I have gone but a little way; I want you, Cousin Anne, to help me to go farther in the short time we are to be here. Oh! if anything certain could be done, any beginning made, which I should feel sure would be carried on in our absence, what gladness it would be!'

They were sitting alone, the young girl and the middle-aged, cheerful-looking woman, by a bright wood-fire early in the evening, but with an open window, through which still fell the light of the grey summer sky; it had been a rainy afternoon, and the air came in so laden with sweet scents, that they could not find it in their hearts to shut it out. They had discussed all the principal topics of family news, and Miss Granard had seen and admired the manner in which Helen had arranged her small establishment, so that now they could speak of the future, and feel that this was the very moment of all others to lay plans for it. They had also paid visits to Silverwood Place, and to Lime End, at which latter place they had found Mrs. Locksley very 'throng,' or, as she perhaps expressed it, 'all rucks and heaps' with her washing, though to Miss Granard's practised eye, a very tidy precision was visible through the apparent disorder.

'Were you not struck to-day with that rock-chamber into which Mrs. Locksley showed us?' asked she, after a pause.

'It was large for a cottage,' answered Helen, 'and did not appear to be much used even on a washing-day. I saw one shelf with a few old books upon it, and a few dried plants; that was all, I think.'

'You had been speaking of our young men's reading-room at Riversedge,' continued Miss Granard, 'with all its conveniences, which, I admit, can only be obtained by a considerable outlay; it also required long experience, and a good deal of practical working, to bring it to its present state: but when we were in that large bare room, and I saw the evidences in it of the sincere desire for knowledge of a working lad, I thought that it would not be impossible to begin something of the same kind there, with your friend, Philip Locksley, as secretary, or whatever the person might be called who had the charge of the books and papers. The clergyman of our parish is the president of our reading-rooms, but all the members are working men and lads, who themselves chiefly support them; for, as you remember, there are two, one being almost entirely maintained by boys of from fourteen to eighteen, and the other by their elders. The boys' reading-room is such a one as I should endeavour to establish first at Lime End.'

'I should be very glad,' said Helen, 'if we could really set on foot any plan that would be of use to that crowd of boys employed at Mr. Holden's factory, and at the others springing up

in that large new district, which I find nearly all belongs to Greystones. The longing desire to do something, I never knew exactly what, to carry out mamma's last wishes, has grown upon me till I have felt as if no effort would be too great, no sacrifice too costly, for its accomplishment; this seems not exactly the sort of work you would first have proposed, but I wanted you to tell me what you thought best.'

Helen's tone had gradually sunk from an eager to almost a disappointed one, but Miss Granard did not appear to notice it. 'What means have you and Edward at your disposal?' she said; 'that must be considered before we form any scheme for Lime End.'

'Edward has his allowance, a guinea a week, which my uncle insisted on, but which Mr. Godwin thought too large for Eton; and I have a hundred a year for my dress, and to pay my maid, and several little expenses; it is not much more than I really want, but I could save a little, and indeed I have saved twenty pounds on purpose for this visit, so that I could begin any plan that did not require a great deal of money. All our regular expenses are, as you know, settled by my uncle and Mr. Godwin.'

'That is clear, so far,' said Miss Granard. 'Now let us consider the circumstances of the parish, and what provision is made for the education and improvement of the great accession of people it has received within the last eight years.'

'It is called the parish of Greystones cum Ashley,' replied Helen; 'for Greystones cum-

sisted of this house, and a small hamlet occupied by the labourers employed on this estate, with a few scattered farm-houses and cottages, until the building began at Lime End, and one after another our pretty old cottages were pulled down. The vicarage is at Ashley, and the schools are there; but it is two miles off, and those who work in the factory here, or even for others, cannot attend them. We have service here once only, on alternate Sundays. What I long for is to have a resident clergyman for this church, and everything placed under his care. Lord Warrender assures me that this will certainly be done in time, and that proper measures will be taken about schools for Lime End also in time; but I want to set something going in the right direction during these holidays, so that he may see Edward and I are in earnest, and if you think a boys' reading-room will be the best thing to begin with, I will gladly, oh how gladly! do all I can towards establishing one.'

'It appears to me the most practicable plan just now,' answered Miss Granard, 'because you have the materials ready; and I have no doubt that the kind-hearted Vicar of Ashley will approve of it, and give you some assistance as soon as there is something tangible to assist in, but you must remember that he is an old man, and that the helps now provided for self-education were not thought of in his youth.'

'He has a new curate,' observed Helen, musingly; 'perhaps he may foster our scheme.'

'I think it would be best first to see whether Mrs. Locksley would be willing to let the use we

meditate be made of her rock-chamber, and then to drive over to Ashley and tell Mr. Dryden what you propose doing, and ask him to help you in the choice of books, and at the opening meeting, so that those who assemble there may feel that they are under the care of the clergyman. Who can tell how much good fruit may be brought forth by this small seed sown in faith and love?'

'Dear Cousin Anne!' exclaimed Helen, 'you have come to me now in my perplexity, as you did at Paris, bringing just the help I wanted; I had begun to dream of great things to be accomplished here, services in the church of exceeding beauty, perfect schools, well-ordered clubs, such as you have at Riversedge, and all without you might have ended in a dream; now I begin to see my way clear!'

A warm kiss from Miss Granard was all the reply she could then make before Edward came into the room, and threw himself down in the arm-chair nearest the window, looking very tired and very handsome; so at least his sister thought, as she rang for tea and the lamp, and asked him where he had been so late.

'Up on the moors with Roger Craddock,' he answered; 'he rode the groom's pony in capital style, and he told me all about the sport in my grandfather's time, and showed me where the game would probably be best this year; I felt quite vexed to think of the 12th of August finding me at Eton instead of here; the poor birds, I'm sorry Mr. Richard Godwin should have the shooting of them! I think he behaved so very

ill that day about the woodcock and poor little Jem; Craddock, however, spoke very well of his father, and thinks he has been extremely annoyed by his son's conduct.'

'I believe,' answered Helen, 'that Mr. Godwin has been a faithful friend to us at all times; by the way, Cousin Anne! do you not think he could supply means for improving the condition of the people at Lime End?'

'Always Lime End, Helen!' said Edward, rather wearily. 'What can be done in a month?'

But Helen did not then unfold her plan; she laughed a soft, light-hearted little laugh, peculiar to herself when she was very happy, and poured out tea into the delicate old china-cups that she had caused to be disemburied from Mrs. Deane's stores, because they had belonged to her mother's dressing-room, and she loved to use all that she had done during her brief visits to the hall when Edward and herself were children. Later in the evening, when she was left alone with her brother, she told him what she was talking of to Miss Granard when he came in.

'Do you remember, Edward,' she continued, 'how often we have said to each other that nothing should prevent our fulfilling mamma's dying entreaty, that we would do good to the people here? This, at least, would be a beginning.'

Helen had not miscalculated the effect of her appeal.

'Let us go at once to Philip Locksley's!' he exclaimed; 'it is not very late, only nine o'clock; we might settle it at once.'

'Oh, no! not to-night; they would all be gone to bed.'

'I do not think so,' replied Edward. 'Craddock is here still, for he is waiting to show me how to set night-lines at the back-water. I shall let him walk with me to Lime End instead, and talk over your plan with him; he knows the ways of this odd place better than we shall ever do, and he was telling me how late all the people are out in the streets. I shall really quite like to see what they look like by gas-light!'

'But you will frighten Widow Locksley,' persisted Helen.

'Not a bit of it. You know I wish to be in the Foreign Office; I shall try my talents for diplomacy at once, and see if I'm likely to succeed by-and-by.'

So saying, Edward was gone in a minute, leaving Helen a little alarmed for the result of his hasty proceedings. She went to Miss Granard, who was writing in her own room, to tell her of them, but she found her by no means displeased at the zeal with which Edward had set out.

'The more the scheme is his own, the better,' she said; 'he will soon enough learn caution and prudence in trying to be useful—here he can scarcely do harm.'

They returned together to the library, and Miss Granard gave her many details of her brother's work at Riversedge, and of what had been done in other places, by seconding even the smallest beginning that had been made by working-lads themselves who had in any way united

for purposes of self-improvement; and she instanced the admirable schools established by the Messieurs Price for the boys employed in their candle-manufactory, the first idea of which had originated from six of them having agreed to meet for reading aloud, and to learn by themselves, after working-hours.

'The great object ought to be, to make such plans lead to the one end of serving God in ways of His own appointment,' continued Miss Granard; 'to make the study of the Bible interesting; to awaken in the hearts of these lads the hope of winning an everlasting reward, and of being ready, for a work of blessing which we can only faintly imagine now, when the Eternal Sabbath begins. Our Lord sanctified the Sabbath by acts of mercy, and gave us this gleam of light on the mysterious life hereafter; we know that then His servants still "shall serve Him;" that when He comes, "His reward is with Him, and His work before Him." How infinite will be the blessing of having trained some who will be ready for good service, both here and in that world to come!'

Helen repeated these words to herself, with a thrill of fresh gladness, many times, as she afterwards stood by the window, listening to the sound of the soft summer wind round the many-angled, high-chimneyed house, and watching the light clouds drifting along above the course of the river, and expecting every minute to hear her young brother's rapid step upon the stairs. It was past eleven before he returned, and her first glance showed her, not the careless fatigue of a

ramble on the moors, but a troubled, excited look which stirred her heart.

'I ought not to have been so long, Helen,' were his first words. 'I hoped you would not have waited for me.'

'You might have been sure I should; but you shall tell me to-morrow the result of your negociations with Mrs. Locksley.'

'She will let you have the room at a fair rent; and when I had brought her to comprehend our plan, and she found how anxious her son was for it to be carried out, she seemed tolerably well pleased with the idea: all the rest I have left for you to settle. It was Philip's extreme desire for some place to be opened in which a number of boys he knows something of might meet for rational amusement and improvement, that made me feel how really careless I was about it. He is a noble fellow, Helen! he thanked me with tears in his eyes, and would, I am sure, take any amount of trouble to forward the scheme. Craddock tells me he has done a good deal by himself in the factory where he works to introduce a desire for knowledge amongst the lads and men too, by reading aloud to them, and that every spare moment of his time is occupied in learning something useful himself.'

'I liked his countenance as soon as I saw him,' said Helen. 'What an energetic mind his must be! But have you been all this time with him and his mother?'

'No,' replied Edward; 'I determined, as I was out, to take a walk through the lower parts of the town, with Craddock as my guide.' Here

he paused—and continued, with some hesitation, 'Helen, you will never see all I did, and, no doubt, that was but little of what might be seen—the crowds, not near so much of men and women, as of mere boys and girls; the riotous laughter, shrieking, ringing through one's ears; the flare of the gin-shops, all open for these crowds to go into; the scene inside the penny-theatre into which we stepped. If your Boys' Institute is to bring up human beings to a higher state than this, I feel to-night as if I should never waste another farthing that might help it!'

'God bless you, my own dear brother,' said Helen, with a kiss in which a mother's love blended with a sister's; 'He has put this good thought into your heart, and He will strengthen your purpose. We will lose no time to-morrow in beginning our work;' and so she hurried him to bed, for he was ready then to stay up half the night talking and planning.

The following morning rose clear and bright, after the storms of the day before; the blue sky was flecked here and there with a few fleecy clouds, and the tall trees in the park shook their branches merrily in the breeze that showered off the last blossoms from the thorns upon the blue-bells at their feet, only to make way for richer though not lovelier tints.

Miss Granard entered the breakfast-room with a letter in her hand, which she gave at once to Edward. 'It is from Charles,' she said; 'he tells me that one of the young men trained in the Riversedge schools from a child, is now living at *Trenton;* he is employed as an accountant and

book-keeper, which often leaves him leisure time, and he wishes for additional evening-work. It struck me that, if you really intend to establish a Boys' Institute, or Reading-room, you will certainly want some competent person to direct the boys in their reading, and to give them assistance, if not regular lessons: our friend, James Austen, would be exactly the person to do this, with all the zeal of a young and ardent mind which thirsts for every kind of information, and delights to impart it. I cannot tell you how glad I was to hear of him.'

'So am I,' said Edward; 'I lay awake last night considering how, when everything was settled about the room, our pupils were to get on, with only Philip to look after them. This is just what we want, Helen, don't you think so?'

'A friend in need,' replied Helen, laughing. 'Did I not tell you that Cousin Anne was never at a loss for materials? And now what shall be our first move this beautiful day?'

'You may depend upon Mrs. Locksley,' replied Edward, as he glanced over Mr. Granard's letter; 'therefore, the question is whether you should consult the Vicar at Ashley, or arrange farther with her. before you talk to him.'

'I will answer for Mr. Dryden's being anxious for some good being attempted here,' said Helen. 'He called upon us, you remember, when you were out last week, and we had a long conversation about the state of Lime End: he said the difficulty was where to begin, till Lord Warrender and Mr. Godwin agreed to advance funds for

regular parochial work. All this was in progress, but the progress seemed very slow.'

'Suppose, then,' said Miss Granard, 'we go first to Mrs. Locksley's, and see what can be done at once, with James Austen to superintend under Mr. Dryden's sanction; and occasionally, perhaps, he will himself visit the institute, and help in the choice of books, and subjects for study and examination, by-and-by.'

'I have done my part,' replied Edward; 'I leave all the rest to you and Helen, only remember that I am good for ten pounds this year towards Mr. Austen's salary. It is really a wonderful relief to my mind to hear of him.'

Soon afterwards, Edward set off to fish at the back-water with Roger Craddock, who had regained much of his old spirit now that he was once more the favourite attendant of the squire.

Meanwhile, Miss Granard and Helen walked through the park to Mrs. Locksley's cottage. Here there had evidently been some preparation for them in the rock-chamber; the floor was swept and sanded, the low broad casement sparkled in the sunshine, and a great posy of green branches filled up the fire-place; while 'Philip's rubbish,' as his mother still called his beloved Hortus-siccus, with his books and writing, which had so strongly excited Miss Granard's interest, were all carried away. The rest of the house needed no more than its daily 'straightening up' to make it fit for visitors of any degree.

'This, Ma'am, was meant for the house-place,' *said Mrs.* Locksley, as Helen and her cousin

entered the rock-chamber; 'but we use it very little except during the fair, when our friends come from a distance, and that comes only once a year. Philip says he can keep his things in his own room, so, as he wishes it, we are ready to oblige you and the young squire.'

This did not sound so civil as Mrs. Locksley intended it should do; but to 'oblige,' in Trenton phrase, simply meant to accede to the wishes of the person addressed, however much doing so might be to the advantage of the speaker.

Miss Granard, at Helen's request, then explained what the object was they had in view, and that the room would be wanted every evening of the week from seven till half-past nine. 'We hope,' she added, 'that your son will take the trouble of being secretary and treasurer to the reading-room; and we depend very much upon him for the choice of the first members.'

'He'll be ready enough to do all he can,' replied the widow, looking pleased at the manner in which her son was spoken of. 'I warrant you it will be work after his own heart; for many and many an evening he has brought young lads to this room to show them his things, and to lend them books, and such like. He's a good boy to me, and I never thwart him in his ways, though they are not exactly like what his father's were, and there was not a better man at Trenton than he.'

It was next settled that a stove should be set in the wide chimney, and gas brought into the old-fashioned cottage, neither of which changes Helen much liked; but a vision of flaring tallow-

candles was not agreeable either, or even of the oil-lamp hung from the rafters, and the boys were used to strong light and considerable warmth in the factories, and both would be required in the long winter evenings. Just then, in summer time, it was not expected that they would assemble so early as later in the year.

The rock-chamber had (as we before mentioned) received its name from having been at first only roughly hewn out of the solid rock which formed the back of most of the cottages in the oldest part of Lime End; for they were built in a row just under the cliff, and were perched at irregular distances from it, here and there looking as if a window and door had been inserted in the rock without any farther masonry. Mrs. Locksley's was, however, by far the best of all, and the room appeared to Miss Granard's practised eye large enough to hold from forty to fifty boys, with a proper amount of deal-tables and desks, with forms and chairs. 'If we had a fire,' she said, 'which would no doubt look better, a few would sit round it, and keep the rest at a distance.'

Helen thought a little ornament might be bestowed on the book-cases, and she was determined to hang up some fine prints of Eastern scenery, as well as a few bold and clear maps to cover the bare walls.

By the time all these arrangements were made, Philip came in from his work, and having washed his face and hands in the scullery, appeared in his fustian jacket, glowing with health and intelligence; the very picture of a young English

workman. He stood for a minute in the presence of the ladies, but—must we confess it?—he soon took his accustomed seat without the least apology, and began discussing the subject of the reading-room with perfect freedom, though with the sincerest gratitude to Miss Arne for having thought of it, and determined to give to Lime End so great an advantage. 'Since the young squire was here last night,' he said, 'I have thought, Ma'am, that perhaps, when once we knew how to set about it, we might have a committee of our own to consider what we really wanted to learn and to read. We should all like books of amusement as well as of instruction; and we should like to learn all we can, to help us in getting on here at Trenton: the difficulty is, that we do not know what to ask for, even when we have the means of getting at books.'

'That seems an excellent idea,' said Helen. 'I suppose we have all felt the difficulty of forming a plan for reading, and then keeping to it; or, as you say, of settling what we really want to learn. Don't you think so, Cousin Anne?'

'I think,' replied Miss Granard, 'that that is half the battle. If Philip and his friends make up their minds what they intend to study, James Austen will be able to teach them; he has a very correct knowledge of the great outlines of history, and of English history in particular, of geography, and of the first books of Euclid. I know, also, that he is a good botanist, and understands something of chemistry; for he was one of our favourite pupils, and many an evening has my brother spent in explaining difficulties

that occurred to him in the course of his reading. How pleasant it will be, if we find that he is willing (as I do not doubt he will be) to undertake this charge!'

'Those things are far beyond most of us,' said Philip, shaking his head; 'at least for the present.'

'Well,' replied Miss Granard, 'you must decide on what you wish to learn, but I think the first elements of geography and of mathematics will be as easy and as interesting as anything you can begin with. The art of expressing simply and clearly in writing what you intend to say, is also one which we have taken great pains to teach at Riversedge. Our boys have always been advised to use only words they understood, and, as a general rule, to avoid long ones; a description of some place in the neighbourhood, for instance, or of a plant or animal, has, therefore, often been written by lads of fourteen or sixteen, that would not have disgraced a college man, because it conveyed in simple language precisely the ideas of the writer. This useful art I am sure you would wish to attain.'

'Yes,' answered Philip, with sparkling eyes; 'we want to know how to write.'

'And first, you must have ideas to express: these James Austen will help you to collect, from things you see round you every day; and in another year I have little doubt the members of the Lime End Reading-room, or Boys' Institute, whichever you like to call it, will find objects of interest in nearly every walk they take, and in *most* really good books they are likely to open.

But we ought not to stay longer now, Helen; Philip will lose all chance of his dinner if we settle half the good that we hope will be obtained in this room.'

They left him to dine accordingly, settling that he was to come up to the hall in the evening, but as they went out of the door leading from the rock-chamber to the lane, Philip showed them the garden he had contrived in the ledges of rock at the back of the house.

'He has worked at it,' said his mother, 'ever since he was so high;' lifting her hand but little above her knee, 'and we have found a great comfort in it, for, small as it is, many a handful of pot-herbs will grow there when the frost has bitten them elsewhere, and we have the earliest currants at Trenton, and the latest roses.'

'That I can easily imagine,' replied Helen, 'with these neat trellises, and all these tiny plots of ground half hidden by the rock.'

'Every bit of it, Ma'am,' said the widow, triumphantly, 'was carried up in a skip to the crevices, by my poor master and his boy; they never were tired when they were together, and Philip has gone on improving the garden ever since.'

'I shall often think of it,' answered Helen, 'when I am away from Greystones; these are the same early white roses that climb up the wall by the breakfast-room there; how pretty they look against the dark rock.'

'Many pleasures are shared alike by poor and rich, Helen,' said Miss Granard, as they pursued their way along the lane; 'but such a comfortable

dwelling as we have left, stands so far above those of the very poor, that it is exactly the place we want for a gathering point. Now let us lose no time in really setting to work! I think all might be ready by this day week, if we can at once arrange with James Austen. His services should be secured for three days in the week, and then he should give instruction to regular classes for perhaps two hours; the other evenings the boys can read and write alone, and amuse themselves with games, such as backgammon and chess, and very probably with drawing and carving. Philip will soon be able to take the lead in all these things, and by next Christmas a decided advance will be seen.'

'Are you quite sure,' asked Helen, doubtfully, 'that we shall be able to meet all the expenses of this plan? They are greater than I ventured to think of at first.'

'I hope Mr. Godwin will help us,' said Miss Granard; 'I think he might easily, with Lord Warrender's sanction, pay the rent we have agreed on, or let Mrs. Locksley have the cottage rent-free; then the stove will cost about thirty shillings at first, and in this country of cheap fuel eight pounds a year will cover the expenses both of the stove and of gas; fifteen pounds a year will be ample for James Austen, and suppose we have forty members, each paying a penny a week, the nine pounds a year thus raised will go a good way towards buying books. Lord Warrender will gladly give you some assistance; Mr. Holden will probably do so too, and I am ready to stand security for all expenses, without feeling the least

alarm upon the subject. We are beginning with perhaps a little more outlay than is absolutely necessary, but in every parish some large room ought to be provided for boys who, having left school, have leisure in the evenings to improve themselves, and the smallness of the expense of such an undertaking would make it easy. A school-room can generally be so employed, or some warehouse-room would often be lent by a benevolent proprietor, if only he were asked to lend it to be used under proper regulations; at any rate, we will show what can be done with the means we have, and hope that many more rooms may be opened soon to rival that at Lime End.'

Helen's thoughts had already flown away to the books, and the great black board, and the forms and tables; these were all duly discussed in the course of the walk home, and indeed for several days afterwards, for during the week following her visit to Lime End, Edward and herself thought of nothing but their Boys' Institute. James Austen entered into the engagement destined for him with gratitude and zeal; there could not have been a better teacher, for he was young and energetic, and had a real innate love of imparting knowledge, besides which, he sincerely desired to serve God and to use every talent committed to him for His glory and the welfare of his fellow-creatures, of whom the race of boys was to him the most interesting portion. He was a true Riversedge man, accustomed to turn every circumstance towards the advancement of moral culture, and at Trenton he had quite

pined for his own congenial pursuits. He helped admirably in the choice of fitting books, and Mr. Granard, also, in reply to a letter from Edward, drew out a clear and simple plan of reading, such as he had found most useful in his own institute.

'James Austen,' he said, 'will be able to give excellent lectures, which I should recommend at least once a week, suggesting subjects of thought, and pointing out the use that may be made of any knowledge his pupils may already have, as a stepping-stone to farther acquirements. The great point is to be simple and interesting enough at first, to arrest and keep up the attention of the boys; besides this, they must understand that their rational amusement is provided for, and that if they chose to read only a story, or to play the whole evening at backgammon after a day's work, they are at perfect liberty to do so; that, in fact, it is their own room, subject only to such regulations as they have themselves approved of; their being members of the institute should be held as a sufficient proof that they intend to abide by them.'

In the course of a few days, Helen found a willing and powerful assistant in Mr. Holden, the owner of the mill, upon whom she called with Miss Granard to explain her plan. He had never hitherto troubled himself with the manner in which the lads or men he employed chose to spend their evenings, but when the idea of their moral improvement was suggested to him, he thought it a remarkably good one, and acting with the usual liberality of his class, he immediately after the visit, enclosed a ten-pound note

to the young lady of the hall, with a respectful and cordial request that it might be applied towards the purchase of books for the library she was beginning to form. This gave quite a fresh impulse to her proceedings, and she drove over with Edward to the old red-brick rectory on the opposite banks of the river, nestled so cosily under a group of sycamores, and surrounded by the trimmest of gardens, to consult the white-haired rector upon the wisest use she could make of her funds. Mr. Dryden knew little of the current cheap literature of the day; his ideas of education for the working-classes were of the most limited description, but he thought Mr. Granard's authority the best she could refer to, and he presented the new institute with a handsome folio Bible with illustrations, and a few valuable notes, which Helen received with great joy, and determined to place on a suitable desk where it would not be out of anybody's reach, and she gladly entrusted her ten pounds to her Cousin Charles, who sent her a well-selected stock of books and maps, which delighted her more than any she had ever had for herself. Lord Warrender and Mr. Godwin were willing to assist in the plan, though they did not enter into it with any very great interest; and, as Edward observed, 'If it had not been for the beginning Philip Locksley had himself made when he had only a few old books to lend to the boys who came to the rock-chamber, and two or three very poor maps to refer to, they would have been set down as mere schemers, and perhaps have got nothing done after all, but this was always some-

thing to point to.' They succeeded at last in getting the cottage for Widow Locksley rent-free, to pay her for her share of trouble, and all arrangements being at last completed, the 20th of July was named for the evening on which the Boys' Institute should be opened. This day was fixed as being the first of the feast at Ashley and Lime End, and the time at which all the members of each family who could possibly assemble, did so.

The Sunday before the feast was called in local language, 'Mothering Sunday,' and many a mother, and many a young servant girl, and 'prentice boy, looked forward through the whole year to the happy meetings it was almost sure to bring, for leave was never refused by master or mistress for the run home if only for that single day. In the good times of the old squires of Greystones, the rustic games, and the dancing of youths and maidens, and the processions of schools and clothing-clubs, all took place within the park, in which (as we have said) stood the ivy-covered church close to the house; but within the last few years the park on such occasions had been more strictly closed than ever, with the single exception of the foot-path through the fields and along the avenue up to the church. This rule, at least, Helen and Edward determined should be relaxed, and they succeeded so well, that on 'Mothering Sunday,' the happiest, and, as it proved, the sunniest holiday of the year, the church was crowded with the families of the factory-people of Lime End. Mr. Newsam, the curate, who had only just entered upon his duties under Mr. Dryden, preached a short but most animated

sermon from the 14th and 15th verses of the 49th chapter of Isaiah, in which he taught how the tenderest love our human nature knows, that of a mother to her child, is exceeded by the love of our Heavenly Father towards us, which is for ever proved by the Life, the Death, the Resurrection of our Lord. Then he spoke of the Heavenly Jerusalem, the Mother of us all, of which the Church on earth is a portion, and a living witness, so that the forms and ordinances whereby we now approach to God shall endure when all is perfected, and Christ Himself appears as the High Priest, offering to His Father and our Father the worship of the redeemed creation. The congregation joined with a hearty good-will in singing the Old Hundredth Psalm after the sermon, but they did not immediately break up, and there seemed to be an uncertainty and a whispering as to their next proceeding, even when they had all passed through the wide deep-shadowed porch into the little weedy churchyard.

Roger Craddock came up to Helen and Edward as they were about following Miss Granard through the narrow chancel-door which led straight to the parterre at the south side of the hall, and said, 'The people are waiting to see the young squire and his sister; they want to express their thanks, if they knew how, for the liberty of walking about the grounds, and for all the kind feeling you, Sir, and Miss Arne have shown towards them; there's many mothers, Ma'am, would like to thank you for what you are doing for their sons.'

To say the truth, Edward was strongly inclined at once to open the garden-door, but Helen put her arm within his, and drew him gently back. 'We ought not to disappoint them, dear Edward; I am sure mamma would have wished us not to go away; and, remember, "Love is a present for a mighty king."'

'You do not expect me to make a speech to them? what can we do?'

'Only let us go through the church again, and leave it by the porch, where so many are still standing.'

'Well, if you really wish it, I do not mind that.'

In another minute, therefore, Helen and her brother, closely followed by Roger Craddock, were surrounded by their Lime End tenantry; strong, keen-eyed men, most of them, from whose hands no amount of soap could quite wash away the marks of their week's toil, and women, on whose faces a long life-struggle had left its hard traces; but kindly admiring looks were bent on Helen Arne in her pretty summer dress, and with the colour varying every moment on her delicate cheek, and rough hands grasped Edward's slight fingers warmly, and many a blessing was uttered by mothers whose children and grandchildren had once more gathered round them, and who looked with almost pity on the orphans, to whom 'Mothering Sunday' brought no renewal of their early gladness.

'Thank you, thank you one and all,' said Edward, taking off his hat, and gaining courage when once he had opened his lips; 'you are

heartily welcome to Greystones as long as the feast lasts, and when I come to live amongst you, I hope you will often assemble here, and enjoy many a sunshine holiday in the park.'

There was a feeling that long and loud cheering, such as the crowd longed to give and actually began, was not quite the right thing close to the church, and with a lady standing amongst them; but the young squire's speech was received with very great satisfaction, and there was a general buzz, especially amongst the women, as again bowing to the little crowd, he walked away with his sister towards the hall-door.

'You did that beautifully, Edward,' she said, with irrepressible pleasure; 'I wish Cousin Anne had not been in such a hurry to go home. I should have liked her to have heard you speak!'

'I am sure I am very glad she was not by; but I could not pass all those kind-hearted fellows and say nothing, it would have been too churlish; and Milton helped me out wonderfully.' Edward might have added, that his foreign education, and the habit of being a good deal in society from his childhood, had done so still more; but altogether he had achieved a great success by those few words amongst his people, and it was pleasant to know it, and to receive the flattery of Helen's delight.

That afternoon, numbers of Lime End families were seen under the trees of the park, and strolling along the beautiful lake-side. And when, according to the new arrangements made by Mr. Dryden and his zealous young curate, the bells rang for evening service, and the little church,

with its few high pews, and its free seats, and school-children's gallery, was again crowded, Helen could scarcely restrain her impatience at the unreasonable space occupied by the hall-pew, which looked like a roomy side-chapel in the midst of the throng.

'You must remember,' said Miss Granard, 'that all the circumstances under which your family resided here have changed; you cannot do all you would think right now, and must be content to go on by degrees; how differently Edward feels now towards his unwelcome tenants, to what he did before he knew anything of them a month ago!'

'Yes, that is a great comfort; and Mr. Newsam's interest in our boys' reading-room is another; he seemed so very glad of any opening to win the young people's hearts at Lime End! I am sure he will attend to it when we are gone.'

The following day, Lord Warrender and his youngest daughter arrived at the hall, to pay a short visit to Edward and Helen in their own home; they were surprised to find that great preparations in the way of tea, and cake, and beer, were made there for the feast, and that several old friends were invited to take a part in the proceedings. Miss Warrender had expected to find her cousin rather weary of her solitude, and not disinclined to return at once to the gaieties of Redleaf; and both her father and herself were quite amused at the ease with which she had contrived already (as they expressed it) to assume the duties of the Lady of the Manor, with an establishment of two maid-servants; an

old butler, who had joyfully taken a few weeks' service at the hall, and a groom for the horses.

'We dwell amongst our own people,' said Helen, smiling; 'you do not think that we are so poorly attended in this our old house of Greystones, as not to be able to provide for the fitting reception of our guests? You shall see, fair cousin, that we have more servitors than you are aware of.'

So, indeed, Miss Warrender soon admitted there were, for on going down, and passing through the hall, she found Jem and Philip busily engaged in wreathing each family-picture with ivy, and decking the stag's horns that surmounted the tarnished oval mirrors with fern and gorse; while Lucy, and two of her trustiest friends, were filling the two great fire-places with green branches, to serve as a background for the pots of flowers the gardener had just brought in.

Helen presently appeared, followed by Master Craddock, with panniers full of flowers, gathered from the woods and fields, as well as from the garden; and the young cousins fell to work together, assisted by the factory girls, who showed wonderful quickness in catching the new ideas of floral grouping and colouring from Helen's and Emily's beautiful bouquets. These were destined to adorn the long tables that were set under the trees in front of the house: there was to be room enough for all, with food enough and to spare, so Edward and his sister had determined, and the piles of bread and butter which Mrs. Locksley had been cutting ever since the morning, and the pyramids of buns, and the heaped-up baskets of

plum-cake, were proofs of their intention. There was no need of a tent for the privileged guests; a sylvan hall was made by a single beech-tree, standing pre-eminent amongst all the wood of Greystones for its height and wide-spreading branches; and here they assembled soon after the luncheon, which Lord Warrender good-naturedly insisted upon calling dinner, to set his niece more free for the opening of the boys' reading-room in the evening.

Mr. and Mrs. Dryden arrived in an ancient high-wheeled yellow phaeton, drawn by sleek black horses, out of which the little old lady was tenderly lifted by her husband; then came a married daughter, with a blooming graceful girl of eighteen, and two younger sisters, all ready to help in handing round the cake and tea. They were succeeded by Mr. and Mrs. Godwin, with their unpleasing son, and more pleasing middle-aged daughters; then came Mr. and Mrs. Holden, the lady remarkable for the richness of her dress on that warm summer's day, and surrounded by a whole train of pretty rosy children, with blue eyes and flaxen hair exactly like her own. Old General d'Arey, too, arrived, delighted to see Squire Arne's grandson on his own land again. Mr. Newsam, of course, was there. And James Austen felt more at home than he had done ever since he exchanged Riversedge for Trenton, as he announced to Miss Granard, who was devoting herself to Lord Warrender, that the procession from Lime End had entered the park. A merry chime of bells rang out from the church-tower as *it came in sight*, its gay colours now lost in the

shadows of the trees, now flashing out in the sunshine.

Most of the people had been to church at Ashley in the morning, according to custom, and now walked in their separate clubs, each headed by boys and men carrying banners, and the whole enlivened by a band of music. Edward and his sister, with their friends, assembled at the hall-steps to receive them; and the young squire's cordial welcome was acknowledged by loud and long and hearty cheers, none of which were louder or longer than that given last by the party of lads headed by Philip Locksley, and carrying a white flag held by blue ribbons, inscribed, 'Thanks for the Boys' Institute!' At last, when the band had played, and the glee-singers had sung, and the children were all looking wistfully towards the tables, the grey-headed butler, and Roger Craddock, who looked remarkably brisk, in a bran new suit of grey cloth with metal buttons just like his last, succeeded in making all take their seats; and then the great brown jugs of beer went merrily round, and the bright cans of smoking hot tea, and the baskets and platters of cake were emptied again and again, till Helen began to fear that after all she had not provided enough; but she need not have been alarmed; there seemed no possibility of getting to an end of the stores brought out by Mrs. Deane, the housekeeper, and her untiring assistants. When the games had begun in the park, and tea and coffee had been served under the giant beech-tree, a fresh interest was given to the scene by boat-races on the river; on flew the tiny narrow boats,

each rowed by two Trenton lads, in blue, or white, or yellow jackets without sleeves, and thrown open at the chest, showing sinewy arms, and well-developed muscles, that astonished Lord Warrender.

'We owe it chiefly to our river,' said Mr. Dryden, looking with great satisfaction at the rowers, 'that our Trenton men are seldom either weak or inert; there is a strong love of manly exercises among them, and swimming seems to come naturally to them. The great object of a lad's ambition here, is to go shares in a river-boat. See how well they bend to their oars!'

'Well done, yellow jackets!' 'Now for it, blues!' and amidst waving of hats and coloured handkerchiefs, the boats went round the buoy in gallant style, and shot past the bank on which all the crowd had gathered.

At half-past six the procession was again formed, and by seven the park was nearly deserted, so that Helen had time to give to the opening of the reading-room, which she would not on any account have missed.

The party that accompanied her, however, was larger than she had intended; Lord Warrender wished to see what Edward and herself had so speedily done; Mr. Holden had never thought before of how his hands spent their time, or of whether heads and hearts were provided for, but he took a new interest in them now, for he had seen that Philip Locksley and his friends were becoming his most useful workmen; Mr. Dryden had driven his yellow phaeton home, being afraid of the evening dews for his delicate pretty old

'Missis,' as he usually called Mrs. Dryden; but Mr. Godwin and his daughters wished to be present, and Edward and Mr. Newsam had already set off, so that quite an imposing group presented itself at Mrs. Locksley's door.

Every preparation had been made that had been decided on, and a good many flowers from the hall appeared to have found their way to the polished deal book-cases and the comfortable tables of the rock-chamber. James Austen had already explained the few simple rules, and written down the names of the subscribers, of whom there were only twenty that first evening.

When the party from the hall arrived, they had all taken their places, and directly afterwards Mr. Newsam, at Edward's request, opened the proceedings by a very earnest and simple prayer for the blessing of God upon the instruction sought, and the lessons that should be given, within those walls; and asked of Him that all assembling there might keep the vows made for them in baptism, and live as becomes good soldiers in the great army of Christ. Edward then said a few words, though he thought it more difficult to speak to boys of his own age in the presence of so many, than to address a crowd as he had done the day before. He said 'the room was now open to every lad working in the factories or at home, in the parish of Ashley and Greystones, provided he was between the ages of thirteen and eighteen, bore a good character, and adhered to the rules Mr. Austen had explained; his subscription of a penny a week would entitle him to all the advantages of the institution, and

he would be eligible to form one of the committee of six, of which Mr. Newsam was so good as to promise to be president, with Philip Locksley as secretary. They must themselves consider what subjects they wished to study, and what lectures they thought would be most interesting; in the meantime, as this was the great holiday of the parish, and they might not be able to give undivided attention to any regular lecture that evening, Mr. Austen would begin by showing them a magic-lantern, which Mr. Granard, of Riversedge, had entrusted to them for the benefit of the Lime End Institute.'

The young squire's speech was listened to with most intelligent and earnest attention, and spoken with such good will, overcoming his boyish shyness, that none who were present could help joining in the applause that followed it.

During the speech James Austen had made his preparations, and immediately there ensued, first a total darkness, then a brilliant light upon the wall at the farther end of the room, and in the midst of it appeared a great oak-tree encircled by painted savages, all gazing upwards at the Druid who was cutting the sacred mistletoe with his golden sickle. This scene was extremely well explained by Mr. Newsam, and succeeded by the landing of the Romans under Julius Cæsar opposed by the Britons, which he likewise explained; then came the first preaching of the Gospel to Lucius, King of the Britons, in the year 156; then our noble King Alfred, a solitary figure, translating the Scriptures into Saxon, by *his candle*, which was painted in stripes to mark

the hours, and placed within a lantern, to preserve it uninjured by the blasts that came through his rudely-built palace. With this picture Mr. Newsam wound up his running lecture; he gave a sketch of King Alfred's life, and labours for the good of his people, and told how to this day his name is remembered with love and veneration, as the wisest and most saintly of our monarchs.

The first request made by Philip Locksley on behalf of his friends, was for a continuation of the magic-lantern scenes on the following evening; and several of the lads, not content with knowing that some easy histories of England were provided amongst the library books, eagerly tendered their shillings to possess one of their own. They were, however, reminded that amusement could not be arranged for them every evening, and that Mr. Newsam had many other calls upon his time; but the magic-lantern was promised for the next week, after a preliminary examination on the first pages of English history.

Helen and Edward were so anxious to show their uncle the various books, and maps, and the great black board, and the elementary drawings they had got for copies, that they saw nearly all the members of the reading-room fairly out of it before they could determine to return home themselves, and they were all very tired with the day's exertions when they assembled once more in the library at Greystones.

Edward's holidays had now drawn nearly to their close, but Lord Warrender was so delighted with the spirit he had shown towards his tenantry,

and with the manly self-possession he had acquired in his intercourse with them, short as it had been, that he no longer grudged his absence from Redleaf; and his daughter more than half envied Helen when she left her in the old home of her race, for a little time longer to exercise that greatest privilege, the power of doing wide-spreading good, and of learning from day to day how truly

> 'All worldly joys go less,
> To the one joy of doing kindnesses.'

John and Charles Mozley, Printers, Derby.